



FREDERIK MEIJER Gardens & Sculpture Park

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NEW YORK-BASED TOD WILLIAMS BILLIE TSIENT ARCHITECTS | PARTNERS SELECTED FOR FREDERIK MEIJER GARDENS & SCULPTURE PARK

Major International Search Leads to Selection of Renowned Architects

GRAND RAPIDS, MI – May 12, 2016 – Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, one of the nation's most significant botanic and sculpture experiences, is pleased to announce that New York firm Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects | Partners has been selected to re-envision and expand its facilities. The firm was selected as part of a rigorous international search that began a year ago with more than sixty firms.

"Meijer Gardens has grown tremendously since opening in 1995 and has become Michigan's leading cultural destination, welcoming visitors from across the nation and internationally. In 2015, 776,928 people chose to visit the park," said David Hooker, President and CEO of Meijer Gardens. "We are excited to draw upon Tod and Billie's creative vision and talent and work with them on this exciting project. Their unique perspective will further enhance our mission and dramatically improve our guest experience."

Well-known for their masterful design of the iconic Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia and, most recently, the Andlinger Center for Energy and the Environment at Princeton University, Williams and Tsien see architecture as "an act of profound optimism."

They have discovered a similar spirit in Meijer Garden's unique marriage of beautiful art and inspiring green spaces. "We are deeply honored to be have been selected by Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park for this special project," said Williams and Tsien. "From our very first visit, we were struck by the incredible quality of the sculpture collection and its sensitive installation throughout the grounds, as well as by their magnificent new Japanese Garden. We saw that the place and the people here are unique."

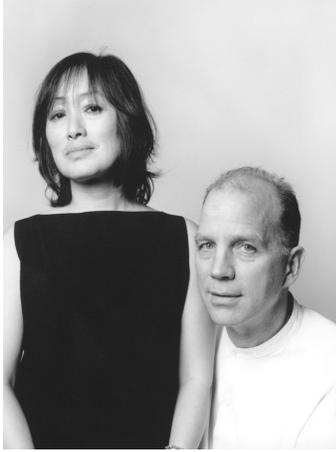
Williams and Tsien are currently studying Meijer Gardens' organization and mission in the context of providing a peerless visitor experience. The design effort is focused on advancing the organization's unique mission of horticulture and sculpture, honoring its donors, and maintaining its commitment to accessibility, diversity, and the environment.

The growth of the 21-year-old organization has been greatly enhanced in recent years with the addition of the eight-acre Richard & Helen DeVos Japanese Garden, designed by Hoichi Kurisu, and the ongoing development of the permanent sculpture collection, including major recent additions of works by Ai Weiwei, Anish Kapoor, Jenny Holzer, and others to the 158-acre main campus.

Meijer Gardens opened in April 20, 1995 with a mission devoted to horticulture, sculpture, the natural environment and the arts. "In many ways, this organization is the actualization of a love story between Fred Meijer—who was a devoted collector of sculpture—and his wife, Lena, who loves plants and flowers," said Hooker. The generosity of the Meijer Family, as well as hundreds of donors and members, has created a cultural organization that, according to *The Art Newspaper*, regularly ranks among the top 100 most-visited museums in the world.

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Image available upon request.



About Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park

One of the world's most significant botanic and sculpture experiences, Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park serves over 650,000 visitors annually. Meijer Gardens was recently ranked in the top 100 most-visited art museums worldwide by Art Newspaper, the leading publication in global art news. The 158-acre main campus features 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 Oldenburg, Moore, Hepworth, Serra, Bourgeois, Ai Weiwei and Plensa, among others. Indoor galleries host changing sculpture exhibitions with recent exhibitions by 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.

About Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects | Partners

Tod Williams and Billie Tsien have been working together since 1977 and founded their architectural practice in 1986. Located in New York, their studio focuses on work for institutions including schools, museums, and not-for-profits—organizations and people who value issues of aspiration and meaning, timelessness and beauty. Their buildings are carefully made from the inside out to be functional in ways that speak to both efficiency and the spirit. A sense of rootedness, light, texture, detail, and most of all, experience, are at the heart of what they design. Over the past three decades they have received more than two dozen awards from the American Institute of Architects, as well as numerous national and international citations. Outside the studio, Tod and Billie are devoted participants in the cultural community and have long-standing associations with many arts organizations. They maintain active academic careers and lecture worldwide. As both educators and practitioners, they are deeply committed to making a better world through architecture.

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