



FREDERIK MEIJER Gardens & Sculpture Park

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ARTPRIZE RETURNS TO MEIJER GARDENS WITH VIRGINIA LEE MONTGOMERY'S *SWORD IN THE SPHINX*

Exhibition includes sculptures and videos located in Meijer Gardens' new Welcome Center

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., – August 31, 2021—Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park is honored to once again play host to ArtPrize after last year's cancellation prompted by the pandemic. ArtPrize returns with a new focus on outdoor work, both downtown and at satellite venues including Meijer Gardens.

ArtPrize runs Thursday, September 16, through Sunday, October 3, 2021. *Virginia Lee Montgomery: Sword in the Sphinx* will remain on display through Sunday, October 31, 2021.

The Virginia Lee Montgomery (VLM) sculpture included in the ArtPrize competition, *Sword in the Sphinx*, is a surreal adaptation of a French 18th-century statue often found in gardens.

Guests will see additional sculptures by VLM located in the Courtyard Level of the new Welcome Center, as well as two short videos shown in the O-A-K Orientation Theater. The additional sculptures, *Marble Ponytails*, are named after ancient deities, including Aurora, Andromeda and Medusa.

"We are excited to be participating in ArtPrize again. Thanks to a Project Grant from ArtPrize, we were able to invite a fantastic artist to activate our new Welcome Center. VLM is a brilliant creative mind who works across different media, including sculpture and film," said Jochen Wierich, Assistant Curator and Researcher.

"VLM's *Sword in the Sphinx* is a contemporary interpretation of an ancient figure that blends with our gardens and sculpture collection in stimulating ways and will be a big draw for ArtPrize visitors."

Meijer Gardens is an official ArtPrize venue as part of the 11th annual ArtPrize competition. ArtPrize exhibition areas will be free and open to the public during regular Meijer Gardens business hours. All other areas will observe regular hours and standard admission fees.

[Images available HERE.](#)

Exhibition Programming

Drop-in exhibition programs are included with admission and do not require advance tickets or registration.

- History, Hair, and the Body: Conveying a Feminist Perspective
Sunday, September 26, 2 pm
Suzanne Eberle, PhD., Professor Emerita, Kendall College of Art & Design
Like Virginia Lee Montgomery, many contemporary artists layer historical references and elements of the human form to address personal, social, and political issues related to feminism. Join us as we explore how and why these artists embody a complex feminist perspective in exciting, moving ways.
- Composite Creatures: A Brief History of Monsters
Sunday, October 17, 2 pm
Amber Oudsema, Curator of Arts Education
Part human, part animal: Images of composite creatures date back to prehistoric times. Their function in evolving cultures varies from the malevolent monster to the benevolent protector. Join us for a brief exploration of how these mythical beasts have appeared in art, from the ancient to the contemporary.

Virginia Lee Montgomery: Sword in the Sphinx is made possible by:

ArtPrize

The Meijer Foundation

Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Foundation

Botanic and Sculpture Societies of Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park

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Townsquare Media

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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 listed in the top 100 most visited museums in the world and the 30 most visited museums in the United States 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, El 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 hosted shows by Jonathan Borofsky, Edgar Degas, Jim Dine, Laura Ford, Richard Hunt, 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.

About ArtPrize®

ArtPrize is an open, independently organized international art competition that takes place in Grand Rapids, Michigan. It celebrates artists working in all mediums from anywhere in the world and is open to any creative with an artwork to enter and a venue willing to host it.

For 18 days, art is exhibited throughout the city in public parks and museums, in galleries and vacant storefronts, in bars and on bridges. ArtPrize awards \$450,000 directly to artists, through grants to support their ambitious work and through prizes which the public decides through the ArtPrize website.

Since its inception in 2009, millions have participated in ArtPrize, displaying their work, opening their spaces to artists and visitors from around the world, and sparking countless conversations about what art is and why it matters.

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