



FREDERIK MEIJER Gardens & Sculpture Park

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEIJER GARDENS CELEBRATES THE SOUNDS OF THE SEASON WITH 46 INTERNATIONAL TRADITIONS

27th-annual University of Michigan Health-West Christmas & Holiday Traditions exhibition explores the sights and sounds of holiday traditions from around the globe.

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. – November 5, 2021 – Experience the wonder of the holidays at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park with the annual *University of Michigan Health-West Christmas & Holiday Traditions* exhibition, on display November 23, 2021, through January 2, 2022. Guests from all over the world visit Meijer Gardens to experience 46 trees and displays representing countries and cultures from across the globe. The adored and enchanting Railway Garden—and the holiday wonderland that encompasses it—will once again loop through three lush indoor garden spaces, including the Grace Jarecki Seasonal Display Greenhouse.

Images available HERE: bit.ly/FMGCHT21

Experience the season through the sounds of the season that are sure to inspire and intrigue. *University of Michigan Health-West Christmas & Holiday Traditions* marks the 27th year of our annual horticulture exhibition at Meijer Gardens, honoring the role that music, bells, gongs, whistles and songs play in treasured holiday celebrations.

Each winter, Meijer Gardens transforms into a botanic wonderland with fresh poinsettias, orchids and amaryllis. The sights and sounds of cultural celebrations from around the world make it a place to reflect and enjoy the holiday season. Volunteers donate hundreds of hours to decorate trees and set up displays. Indoors and out, our grounds sparkle with 300,000 lights.

The unique horticultural artistry of the Railway Garden, sponsored by Warner Norcross + Judd, complements the trolleys, trains and handcrafted buildings replicating 40 Grand Rapids landmarks. Visitors will find familiarity in the Helen DeVos Children's Hospital replica building, with its iconic glass exterior made of hundreds of individual hydrangea flower petals, and in the royal poinciana pods, pomegranate, Japanese fantail willow, and

bamboo making up the architecture of the Van Andel Institute replica building. Five landmarks from Grand Rapids' sister cities around the world are also represented in the Railway Garden.

"This year we're highlighting numerous traditions that incorporate sound into their holiday celebrations," said Steve LaWarre, Vice President of Horticulture at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park. "We hope our guests will be delighted not only visually, but also by the wonderful sounds of the season."

Highlights include the Austria tree, adorned with ornaments that celebrate the birthplace of the quintessential Christmas carol *Silent Night*; the Kwanzaa display, which showcases percussion and handheld instruments that bring rhythm and melody to this cultural celebration; and the sounds of trains traveling through landmark West Michigan buildings and Grand Rapids sister cities from around the world in the beloved Railway Garden.

In many cultures, the holidays bring people together in distinct and memorable ways difficult to capture in a display. Meijer Gardens is again presenting the original film *Joy*, which explores the diverse festive fabric that is holiday life across our local communities. This film will be shown continuously in the Hoffman Family Auditorium and is also available on the [Meijer Gardens YouTube channel](#).

Exhibition Activities:

- **Extended Holiday Hours:** Open until 9 pm November 23 and 30, December 7, 14, 20–23 and 27–30.

PLEASE NOTE: Meijer Gardens will be closed November 25, December 25 and January 1.

- **Live music by Samuel Nalangira:**
Fee: Included with admission.
Samuel Nalangira, a native of Uganda and a folk/world master of multiple traditional instruments, welcomes all with Sounds of the Season.
Tuesdays: November 23, 30, December 7, 14, 21 | 5–7 pm
- **The Original Dickens Carolers:**
Fee: Included with admission.
The Original Dickens Carolers roam the BISSELL and Gunberg corridors, singing holiday favorites and bringing good cheer for all to hear!
Tuesdays: November 23, 30, December 7, 14, 21 | 6–8 pm
- **Santa Visits:**
Fee: Included with admission.
Visit Santa in the Lena Meijer Tropical Conservatory, for a picture-perfect setting like no other!
November 23, 30, December 7, 14, 21 | 5–8 pm
- **Rooftop Reindeer:**
Fee: Included with admission.

Visit Michigan's Farm Garden for a close-up reindeer experience—and maybe even touch their soft velvety noses. Reindeer provided by Rooftop Landing Reindeer Farm.

Saturdays: November 27, December 4, 11, 18 | 1-4 pm

- **Winter-Time Walks:**

Fee: Included with admission.

Winter can be chilly, yet fun for all ages! Bundle up and join us for outdoor discovery walks highlighting the *University of Michigan Health-West Christmas & Holiday Traditions* exhibition and the unique beauty of the season. Among the walk themes are Birds and Their Senses, and Holiday Carols and Symbols.

November 30, December 2, 7, 9, 14, 16, 21, 23, 28 | 11:15 am–12 pm

- **Christmas and Holiday Themed Classes:** Enjoy festive virtual learning opportunities for adults and families. Fees apply. Visit [MeijerGardens.org/calendar](https://www.meijergardens.org/calendar) for more information.

University of Michigan Health-West Christmas & Holiday Traditions is made possible by University of Michigan Health-West; The Meijer Foundation; Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Foundation; Botanic and Sculpture Societies of Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park; Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs; Life EMS; Michigan Radio; and Star 105.7. The Railway Garden is sponsored by Warner Norcross + Judd, Inc.

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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.

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