



FREDERIK MEIJER Gardens & Sculpture Park

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FREDERIK MEIJER GARDENS & SCULPTURE PARK ANNOUNCES REDEDICATION OF VOLUNTEER TRIBUTE GARDEN AND UPDATED SCULPTURE BY OLIVERO RAINALDI, *THE TRIBUTE*

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., – April 5, 2022 – Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park is proud to announce the renovation and rededication of the Volunteer Tribute Garden and the sculpture *The Tribute*, by Oliviero Rainaldi.

Fifteen years after the dedication of the Volunteer Tribute Garden and Rainaldi's original sculpture, both the space and the sculpture are getting a new look. In 2006, Rainaldi was first commissioned to create a work of art to honor the thousands of volunteers who give their time and talents to Meijer Gardens. As the buildings, garden spaces and number of volunteers at Meijer Gardens grow, so too did this sculpture.

Designed by Progressive AE and the Meijer Gardens horticulture team, this garden has been expanded and redesigned to be more accessible and improve views of the wetland, sculpture and horticulture. Originally opened in 2006, this space is dedicated to the thousands of volunteers that give their time and talents to help Meijer Gardens operate. The Volunteer Tribute Garden update includes a new boardwalk area and outdoor classroom that extends on top of a wetland, providing a great opportunity to teach guests about the importance of the natural environment, water and the ecosystem.

Newly designed aluminum panels are being inserted into *The Tribute's* interior. The exterior bronze panels poetically tell the stories of a diverse group of Meijer Gardens guest experiences, as facilitated by the many knowledgeable volunteers. The two interior panels incorporate stories of place and the emotion of love. Rainaldi describes the central curve as "the heart of the sculpture, which should be dedicated exclusively to Fred and Lena Meijer, creating an idealized place where horticulture and sculpture dialog together."

The second structure brings viewers into a water scene, where they look up at the sky through reeds and will notice an aerial view of the Great Lakes, as if looking down upon the Earth. Water has historically been symbolic of life, power, purity and strength. These elements together represent and pay tribute to Fred and Lena Meijer, to the natural beauty of West Michigan, and to the thousands of dedicated volunteers who have donated their time and talents to Meijer Gardens.

The Tribute and the Volunteer Tribute Garden will be rededicated on April 20, 2022, in a special ceremony at 4 pm.

PROGRAMMING:

A Conversation with Oliviero Rainaldi

Tuesday, April 19, 7 pm

Huizenga Grand Room

Included with admission. Registration required at: [MeijerGardens.org/calendar](https://meijergardens.org/calendar)

Italian artist Oliviero Rainaldi, well known for his artwork focused on the human figure in a post-war and contemporary setting, takes a linear approach that emphasizes humanity's most ideal and essential qualities. Rainaldi's sculpture *The Tribute*, originally installed in 2006, tells the stories of a diverse group of Meijer Gardens guest experiences, as facilitated by our many knowledgeable volunteers. The artwork was temporarily removed to accommodate the redesign of our Volunteer Tribute Garden. This spring, we welcome *The Tribute* back with two new interior panels, focusing on the love between Fred and Lena Meijer and the importance of water in our West Michigan and Great Lakes communities.

Join us April 19 at 7 pm to hear Rainaldi share his work and inspirations, in a conversation with Meijer Gardens President & CEO David Hooker and Amber Oudsema, Curator of Arts Education.

Volunteers

Wanted. Needed. Appreciated. Various jobs and shifts.

Contact Valerie Maciejewski at vmaciejewski@meijergardens.org or 616-974-5221.

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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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