

## For Immediate Release



April 5, 2023

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## Memphis Botanic Garden Announces Rich Soil at the Garden Exhibition Details & Programming

*Rich Soil at the Garden Presented by Bank of America Opens on May 5, 2023*

**Memphis, TN** – The Memphis Botanic Garden (MBG) today announced further details and programming for the upcoming *Rich Soil at the Garden* seasonal exhibition presented by Bank of America. The exhibition officially opens at the Garden on May 5, 2023, with a special MBG Members Preview Night on May 4, and will close on October 1, 2023.

“We are thrilled to have *Rich Soil at the Garden* as our fourth traveling exhibit at Memphis Botanic Garden,” said Gina Harris, Director of Education & Events. “The sculptures of flowing dresses and figures in motion will feel as if they are part of the living landscape and give guests an opportunity to reflect on and be inspired by this art.”

Visitors can dig into *Rich Soil at the Garden* during the opening weekend festivities on May 4-6. MBG Members are invited to explore the exhibition early on May 4 from 6-8 pm to preview it before it officially opens to the public. Enjoy a lovely spring evening at the Garden while you explore the exhibition. Children can participate in a creative wire craft inspired by the exhibition & a cash bar will be available to grab a cocktail, glass of wine, or beer to enjoy. Admission is free and limited to MBG Members only for this special evening event.

On opening day, May 5, the Garden is hosting the *Rich Soil to Rich Souls Panel Discussion* at 11 am. The esteemed panelists will discuss how art and nature can grow and heal a community featuring:

- Kristine Mays, Rich Soil at the Garden Artist
- Karen Niceley, Community Engagement Manager for Collage Dance
- Dorimar Ferrer, Executive Director of Cazateatro
- Lar'Jaunette Williams, Executive Director of Memphis Black Arts Alliance
- Anne Froning, Co-Owner of Being:Art

After the panel discussion, guests are invited to stay & explore the exhibition and bring a lunch to enjoy in the picnic area. The panel discussion is free to attend & no reservation is required.

*Rich Soil at the Garden Family Day* on Saturday, May 6, from 10 am-4 pm allows guests to immerse themselves in the exhibition. Visitors to the Garden on this day can meet artist Kristine Mays from 10-10:45 am, 1-1:45 pm, & 3-3:45 pm and enjoy performances by Collage Dance that were inspired by the exhibition at 11 am & 2 pm, and children can try their hand at creating their own miniature sculpture using wire. Plus there will be a cash bar and food trucks on-site for a picnic lunch. Free with Garden admission. No reservations are required.

Beyond opening weekend, visitors can en-RICH their experience at the Garden from May through September with Sunday afternoon music & performances from local arts & cultural organizations and a special field trip centered around the exhibition.

*Rich Sounds at the Garden*, a brand new event series developed in conjunction with the exhibition, will premiere on May 28 and continue on the last Sunday of June, July, August, and September, from 2-5 pm. Visitors can enjoy performances and demonstrations from local arts & culture organizations. There will also be a cash bar on-site to grab a seasonal sip on these special afternoons. Free with Garden admission. No reservations are required.

**Rich Sounds at the Garden Schedule:**

May 28: Ekpe Abioto

June 25: Cazateatro Bilingual Theatre Group

July 30: Memphis Jazz Workshop

August 27: Stax Academy

September 24: Memphis Symphony Orchestra Ensemble

School groups can book a special *Rich Soil at the Garden* field trip which includes an interactive tour, a craft, and thought-provoking activities. The one-hour tour will help connect students to the natural world and explore their artistic side. The program can be adapted for grades K-12 and is available between May 8 & September 29.

“Bank of America has long believed in the power of the arts to help educate and enrich societies, bring communities together and create greater cultural understanding, including here in Memphis,” said Trevia Chatman, president, Bank of America Memphis. “The bank’s sponsorship of Memphis Botanic Garden’s upcoming Rich Soil at the Garden exhibit combines our commitment to the arts and diversity by highlighting the unique perspective of artist Kristine Mays, while supporting arts accessibility at an important Memphis institution. This exhibit will showcase Mays’ artform of wire creations which are exquisite pieces of art.”

*Rich Soil at the Garden* is presented by Bank of America with support from Grinder Taber Grinder, Realty Capital Management, Forever Ready Productions, and WKNO Public Media.

MBG Members enjoy free daily admission to the Garden. For non-members, daily admission tickets can be purchased upon arrival and are \$12 for adults, \$10 for seniors (62+), \$7 for children aged 2-12, and free for children under 2. The Garden is open daily from 9 am-6 pm.

Learn more about *Rich Soil at the Garden* at [membg.org/rich-soil](http://membg.org/rich-soil)

#### **About Memphis Botanic Garden**

*The Memphis Botanic Garden is a not-for-profit 501(c) (3) organization dedicated to being an exemplary center for horticulture and environmental enrichment. Serving over 40,000 school-aged children annually, and hosting 260,000 visitors each year, Memphis Botanic Garden strives to enhance lives by connecting people with nature, increasing awareness and appreciation of our environment. For more information please visit [membg.org](http://membg.org).*

#### **About Bank of America**

*At Bank of America, we’re guided by a common purpose to help make financial lives better, through the power of every connection. We’re delivering on this through responsible growth with a focus on our environmental, social and governance (ESG) leadership. ESG is embedded across our eight lines of business and reflects how we help fuel the global economy, build trust and credibility, and represent a company that people want to work for, invest in and do business with. It’s demonstrated in the inclusive and supportive workplace we create for our employees, the responsible products and services we offer our clients, and the impact we make around the world in helping local economies thrive. An important part of this work is forming strong partnerships with nonprofits and advocacy groups, such as community, consumer and environmental organizations, to bring together our collective networks and expertise to achieve greater impact. Learn more at [about.bankofamerica.com](http://about.bankofamerica.com).*

#### **About Rich Soil at the Garden**

*Rich Soil, created by American artist Kristine Mays, is inspired by the movements and gestures of Alvin Ailey’s dance composition “Revelations.” The exhibition features 29 sculptures in seven groupings placed throughout the 96-acre grounds of the Garden. Each sculpture consists of thousands of pieces of wire hooked and looped together to create these intriguing forms which pay honor to ancestors—those that walked, lived on, and tended to this land—to the lives that have been overlooked and “forgotten” within our history. These forms deliver a message of strength while challenging how we view ourselves and others. Within the confines of hard metal wire is a sense of resilience and perseverance—a need to push forward and thrive. The work also speaks to identity—the question of who we are, what we can do with our lives, and the impact our lives have on the world. The implied movement in the works evokes expressive gestures through the delicate balance between perceived fragility and realized strength.*

#### **About Artist Kristine Mays**

*Kristine Mays currently lives and works in San Francisco, California. She has been an exhibiting artist since 1993. Mays seeks to create change with her art, creating socially conscious works of beauty that speak to social issues. She has participated in programming at the De Young Museum, the Museum of African Diaspora (MoAD), and exhibited at the California African American Museum (CAAM). Mays is represented by Modernism Inc. Gallery. Her work is a part of the permanent collection at the Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento, CA.*

*Collectors of her work include Star Wars creator George Lucas and collector/philanthropist Peggy Cooper Cafritz, with her work also displayed in many private collections throughout the United States.*

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