

MMFA

Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MONTGOMERY MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS ANNOUNCES REOPENING OF CADDELL SCULPTURE GARDEN

Museum to continue content and program delivery via social media platforms and website as pandemic-necessitated distancing and isolation protocols persist.

Montgomery, AL – The Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts (MMFA) announces the start of a phased reopening of the Museum. In this first phase, the Museum reopens the Caddell Sculpture Garden. MMFA members are invited for a first look August 4-9. The public is invited to visit the Sculpture Garden beginning Tuesday, August 11. The second phase, the reopening of the changing exhibition and permanent collection galleries, remains TBD.

New On View

Visitors returning to the Caddell Sculpture Garden will encounter the first installations of the Museum's second rotation of outdoor sculpture, all installed during the mid-March-July closure. These include three loans and one acquisition.

The three loans will be on view for the next eighteen months to two years. The first to be installed, in the last days leading to our mid-March COVID-19 closure, was Patrick Dougherty's *Rough 'n Tumble*. For this work, the North Carolina-based artist found inspiration in the ancient pyramids of Nubia—located in the Nile Valley of present-day Sudan. Dougherty placed one edge of each of his massive, woven pyramids on a pillow-like form to throw the structures off-balance. While they reach regally to the sky, the pyramids are simultaneously filled with a sense of wonder and whimsy. This "stickwork" was constructed of locally-gathered saplings over three weeks in March 2020 and will be on view until the elements have their way with it, roughly two years.

The second work to be installed after Museum staff began to return to work in the late spring was Tuscaloosa-based artist Jamey Grimes' *Teraxacum*, 2020. While most of this gigantic, aluminum dandelion sits atop the Sculpture Garden's plinth, a number of the seeds seem to have been taken by a breeze that causes them to skitter across the length of the adjacent reflecting pool. While made of very different materials and methods than Dougherty's *Rough 'n Tumble*, Grimes' oversized *Teraxacum* or dandelion is an equally captivating and whimsical creation, in this case one inspired by a wildflower found in nature.

The third and most recent installation is one by Karen LaMonte, an American artist now-based in the Czech Republic. LaMonte works with various materials including cast glass and metals to create life-sized garments that appear to be worn by invisible figures. In her work now on view in the Garden, *Reclining Nocturne 3*, 2016, LaMonte sculpted a gown, suggestive of Greek or Roman antiquity, using the ever-changing nuances of rusting iron to articulate the graceful, diaphanous folds of the classical garment.

The fourth and final new work on view is the only one that will be added to the Museum's permanent collection (a gift in memory of Samuel Leopold Schloss by the Samuel L. Schloss Family Foundation with additional funds provided by the Sara Lee Corporate Art Collection). *Chance Meeting* is a bronze and metal figural group by leading American sculptor George Segal. Segal's sculptures sensitively portray life-sized figures in everyday encounters, often on city streets and connected to found objects from urban environments. In *Chance Meeting*, made in 1989, Segal depicts one man and two women standing and engaging in conversation on a street corner under a post with intersecting "One Way" street signs. Situated just inside of the Garden's gates, we can think of no better way—especially in this time of continued distancing and isolation—than to welcome everyone back than with this work, a powerful emblem of the serendipitous moments in life where our paths cross with those of beloved (and, now, much-missed!) others.

New Visiting Guidelines

During this initial phase of our reopening, only the Caddell Sculpture Garden will be accessible. While the entire Museum is not reopened, visitors will have access to the indoor restrooms.

Advanced registration is not required; however, in order to allow for ample distancing, the number of visitors at any one time will be limited.

To begin your visit, enter through the Sculpture Garden gatehouse.

The Museum will be open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 AM to 5 PM and Sunday from noon to 5 PM. **There will be no evening hours on Thursdays.**

For Your Safety

All Museum staff have their temperature taken each day and are required to wear masks.

All Museum visitors over the age of six are required to wear a mask or face covering during their visit.

Please stay at home if you are feeling ill or have been exposed to COVID-19 in the fourteen (14) days prior to your visit.

Following CDC and ADPH guidelines, we have increased the frequency that we clean and disinfect high-touch areas. Additionally, hand sanitizer will be available for visitors.

Distancing is encouraged and indicated by signage throughout the Museum.

In order to limit touchpoints, water fountains have been disabled—so be sure to bring a personal water bottle to enjoy while in the Garden.

New Amenities

Garden furniture located under the lower garden's tree canopy is the ideal place to relax or enjoy a picnic.

Enhanced public Wi-Fi signal is great for casual web browsing or getting a little work done remotely.

Not New but Next

We'll keep you posted with updates about an expanded reopening as the conditions in our community allow us to determine a date to welcome you back to our galleries, replete with refreshed permanent collection galleries and all-new changing exhibitions!

Online Programming to Continue!

While we are so glad to—*at last*—welcome visitors back to the Museum, we also maintain our commitment to supporting and keeping connected with those who are not yet ready to return to the Museum and those who've come to value their online access to the Museum. With this in mind, we plan to maintain—and, in fact, expand, online opportunities for engagement—be it the content we deliver via our website or the social media channels we utilize. Follow us for weekly community reflections on works in the Museum's collection by Black artists, challenge yourself to solve puzzles made from works in the collection, find art related recommendations for reading and watching, go behind the scenes with local artists during bi-monthly video broadcasts, and hone your botanical art skills with a monthly virtual artmaking class—all from the comfort of your home.

MMFA Background

The Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts was founded in 1930 by a group of local artists as a place for both exhibiting art and providing art education. The original intentions of our founders—to exhibit and teach—continue to inspire and inform every action and activity here at the Museum which, since 1988, has shared the 277-acre Blount Cultural Park with our partners across the lake at the celebrated Alabama Shakespeare Festival.

Today’s MMFA visitors stroll art-studded grounds and permanent collection galleries. They see compelling changing exhibitions, make art in its bustling studios, or participate in other engaging events and programs. And, as of late September 2018, MMFA visitors can now relax and recharge in the serenity of our stunning new three-acre sculpture garden.

While the Museum’s collection is still home to the art of many of the regional artists who first established it, over time, it has become known for its strength in American art and Old Master Prints. Recent, important acquisitions of art made by African American and Asian artists and works inspired by images and themes related to the experiences of these groups represent the breadth and depth of the lives and concerns of those who now call Montgomery and the River Region home. Through the exhibition of this work as well as the programs and events that help connect our communities with it, the MMFA is recognized as a leading arts and cultural resource here in the state and Southeastern region.

The MMFA is a department of the City of Montgomery and is supported by funds from the City of Montgomery, with additional funds from the Montgomery County Commission and the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts Association. Programs are made possible, in part, by grants from the Alabama State Council on the Arts.

General Information

Reopening of Caddell Sculpture Garden

When: Member preview: August 4-9
 Public reopening: Beginning August 11

Where: Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts
 Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park
 One Museum Drive
 Montgomery, AL 36117

Information: www.MMFA.org or 334.625.4333
@MontgomeryMFA | #mymmfa

Hours:
Sculpture Garden Tuesdays-Saturdays, 10 AM–5 PM
Sundays, Noon to 5 PM
(Note: Extended evening hours on Thursdays temporarily suspended)

Admission: Free! With ample, free parking.
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