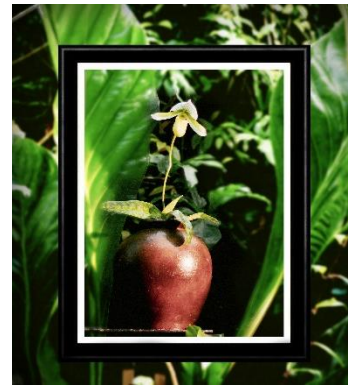


MARIE SELBY BOTANICAL GARDENS

Robert Mapplethorpe's Photographs and Patti Smith's Lyrics Blossom at Selby Gardens Starting February 2022

Marking Sixth Edition of Jean & Alfred Goldstein Exhibition Series,
Robert Mapplethorpe and Patti Smith: Flowers, Poetry, and Light Showcases
Nature-Inspired Works by Two Iconic Contemporary Artists in Garden Setting for First Time



L: Robert Mapplethorpe, *Hyacinth*, 1987. M: *Patti Smith and Robert Mapplethorpe IV*, 1969, photograph by Norman Seeff.
R: Conceptual of Horticultural Installations

Sarasota, FL – July 22, 2021 – This winter, Marie Selby Botanical Gardens (Selby Gardens) will spotlight the work of **Robert Mapplethorpe**, one of the most significant photographers of the 20th century, together with the poetry of legendary singer-songwriter and poet **Patti Smith** in a special exhibition on view throughout the garden's 15-acre Downtown Sarasota campus. Marking the sixth edition of the Gardens' annual Jean & Alfred Goldstein Exhibition Series, which explores the work of major artists through the lens of their connection to nature, this immersive exhibition puts a selection of Mapplethorpe's photographs of orchids, hyacinths, and irises, and excerpts of Smith's poems and lyrics on flowers and nature, in dialogue with new horticultural installations inspired by the two artists' work.

On view from February 13 through June 26, 2022, ***Robert Mapplethorpe and Patti Smith: Flowers, Poetry, and Light*** is curated by Dr. Carol Ockman, Selby Gardens' Curator-at-Large and the Robert Sterling Clark Professor of Art History Emerita at Williams College. The Gardens will host an **Evening with Patti Smith**, on Tuesday, February 15, a lecture and performance with Smith that will shed new light on this body of work.

"Selby Gardens is thrilled to bring together this curated selection of nature-inspired works by Robert Mapplethorpe and Patti Smith for the first time ever in a botanical garden as part of our innovative Goldstein Exhibition Series," said Jennifer Rominiecki, President & CEO of Selby Gardens. "Marking the

first time that Selby Gardens has presented the work of a living artist and a contemporary photographer in the series, this exhibition creates an immersive experience for our visitors, where our gardens and floral displays set the stage for a unique cultural encounter and exchange with two of the most iconic artists of our time.”

Mapplethorpe and Smith met the day that Smith moved to New York City in the summer of 1967. Their enduring relationship, through which the two spent time as artistic collaborators, lovers, and ultimately friends, proved formative to each other’s creative practice and artistic output. *Flowers, Poetry, and Light* reunites Mapplethorpe and Smith in a garden setting, presenting works by each inspired by nature during the counterculture movements of the 1960s, 70s, and 80s.

Selby Gardens’ Conservatory, world renowned for its collection of orchids and bromeliads, will be reimagined as Mapplethorpe’s photography studio, complete with drop cloths and lights that will spotlight and frame living flowers, following the principles of balance and classicism embraced by the photographer. In the Museum of Botany & the Arts, a curatorial exploration of Mapplethorpe’s aesthetic strategies, influences, and practices will unfold in an exhibition display designed to evoke the artist’s apartment, featuring four iconic flower photographs by Mapplethorpe, from the Graphic Studio gravures including *Orchid*, *Iris*, and *Hyacinths*, as well as two bust-length photographs of Ken Moody, one of Mapplethorpe’s most photographed subjects, holding an apple and palm frond respectively. The installation will also include archival photos and period furnishings. Throughout the grounds and gardens, installations of floral displays inspired by these seminal photographs will be accompanied by a poetry walk of works by Patti Smith, excerpting verses from her poems and songs to provide moments of reflection within the garden and underscore the rich symbolism of flowers as the fruits of life, enticement, and rebirth.

“Through this unique and immersive installation, visitors will be able to explore Mapplethorpe’s aesthetic strategies for capturing beauty, including his debts to classical sources and the specific ways he uses light, composition, and color in images of flowers,” said Dr. Carol Ockman, the exhibition’s curator. “These principals of classicism, sensuality, and beauty are echoed from the museum throughout the gardens and conservatory, and are highlighted by the resounding words of Smith, Mapplethorpe’s once lover, close friend, and muse.”

ABOUT ROBERT MAPPLETHORPE

Robert Mapplethorpe (American, 1946–1989) was a photographer, whose vast, provocative, and powerful body of work has established him as one of the most important artists of the twentieth century. Equally recognized for his classical still lifes as for his portrayals of nudes, Mapplethorpe’s subjects were often his friends and lovers captured in dramatically lit, posed studio photographs that emphasized a high degree of formalism and concern for art historical symbols.

Born in Queens, Mapplethorpe attended classes at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, where he experimented with various materials and mixed media collages, influenced by artists such as Joseph Cornell and Marcel Duchamp. It was in Brooklyn where he met fellow artist and musician Patti Smith, who posed in many of his earliest portraits and who would go on to memorialize their relationship and enduring friendship in her best-selling memoir, *Just Kids* (2010). In 1970, Mapplethorpe acquired his first Polaroid camera and

began taking photographs of his family, friends, and public personalities regularly, culminating in his first solo exhibition of this work in 1973 at the Light Gallery in New York City. By the late 1970s, Mapplethorpe's focus turned to photographing sexually charged images, which ultimately brought him significant critical attention. He met Lisa Lyon, the first World Women's Bodybuilding Champion, in 1980, and over the next several years they collaborated on a series of portraits and figure studies, as well as a film and book.

Mapplethorpe was diagnosed with AIDS in 1986 and subsequently established the Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation, dedicated to supporting photography at the institutional level and AIDS/HIV medical research. His first major American retrospective was presented at the Whitney Museum of American Art in 1988, just a year before his death. Mapplethorpe's work has since been exhibited at documenta in Kassel, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles, the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the Deutsche Guggenheim in Berlin, and the Tate Modern in London, among many other institutions.

ABOUT PATTI SMITH

Patti Smith, born in Chicago and raised in South Jersey, migrated to New York City in 1967. Her extensive achievements as a performer, author, recording and visual artist is acknowledged worldwide. Released in 1975, Smith's first recording, *Horses* (the cover of which was photographed by Mapplethorpe), was inducted into the National Recording Registry at the Library of Congress in 2010 by the National Recording Preservation Board. Her subsequent albums include *Radio Ethiopia*; *Easter*, which included *Because the Night*, co-written with Bruce Springsteen; *Wave*; *Dream of Life*, which included *People Have the Power* co-written with her late husband Fred "Sonic" Smith; *Gone Again*; *Peace and Noise*; *Gung Ho*; *Trampin'*; *Land*; *Twelve*; *Banga*; and *Outside Society*. She is a four-time Grammy® nominee and a Golden Globe nominee for the song "Mercy Is" co-written with Lenny Kaye for the film *Noah*. Steven Sebring's 2008 documentary, *Patti Smith: Dream of Life*, received an Emmy nomination.

Patti Smith was awarded the prestigious 2010 National Book Award for her bestselling memoir, *Just Kids*, chronicling her deep friendship with photographer Robert Mapplethorpe and the evolution of their work. Her books include *Witt*; *Babel*; *Woolgathering*; *The Coral Sea*; *Auguries of Innocence*; *Collected Lyrics, 1970-2015*; *M Train*; *Devotion*; and *Year of the Monkey*.

Smith holds the honor of "Commandeur des Arts et des Lettres" from the French Ministry of Culture. In 2007 she was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. She was honored by ASCAP with the Founders Award in 2010, representing lifetime achievement, and was the recipient of Sweden's 2011 Polar Award, an international acknowledgement for significant achievements in music. In 2013, Smith received the Katharine Hepburn Medal from Bryn Mawr College, recognizing women whose contributions embody the drive and work ethic of the celebrated actress. In 2014, Barnard College Board of Trustees presented Patti Smith with their Medal of Distinction. In 2016, she was awarded the Burke Medal for Outstanding Contribution to the Arts in Trinity College, Dublin.

Smith's photographs, drawings, and installations have been exhibited in galleries and museums worldwide. Coupled with her photography exhibit *Higher Learning*, Smith received the Laurea

Magistrate causa from Parma, Italy and an honorary doctorate in Euro-American Literature from Padova University. She was awarded The Badge of the Austrian Decoration of Science and Art in 2019. 2020 Smith received the literary service prize from PEN America and the Wall Street Journal acknowledged her as a Literature Innovator.

Her renowned band includes guitarist and author Lenny Kaye, who she has collaborated with since 1971; drummer Jay Dee Daugherty since 1975; Tony Shanahan on bass and keyboards, since 1996; and her son, guitarist Jackson Smith, for over a decade.

At present Smith writes, performs, lending support for human-rights issues and environmental groups, primarily Pathway to Paris, a nonprofit organization co-founded by her daughter, Jesse Paris Smith, offering tangible solutions for combatting global climate. She resides in New York City. She is a featured writer on Substack, where her twice weekly writings and readings can be subscribed to online.

EXHIBITION SPONSORS

Presenting sponsors are Drs. Joel Morganroth and Gail Morrison Morganroth. Lead sponsors include Amicus Foundation, Gulf Coast Community Foundation, Marianne and William McComb, and Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation. Major sponsors include the following: James and Maryann Armour Foundation, Beverly and Bob Bartner, Ed and Betsy Cohen/Arête Foundation, Cornelia and J. Richard Matson, Keith D. Monda and Veronica Brady, and Jean Weidner Goldstein. Supporting and Additional sponsors include Teri A Hansen, Marcy and Michael Klein, Jennifer and Rob Rominiecki, Hobart and Janis Swan, and Marcia Jean Taub and Peter Swain. The exhibition is also made possible because of support from The State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture, and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture and paid for in part by Sarasota County Tourist Development Tax Revenue.

ABOUT THE JEAN & ALFRED GOLDSTEIN EXHIBITION SERIES

Launched in 2015, the Jean & Alfred Goldstein Exhibition Series examines master artists and their relationships to nature in the context of a botanical garden. Past exhibitions include *Roy Lichtenstein: Monet's Garden Goes Pop!* (2021); *Salvador Dalí: Gardens of the Mind* (2020); *Gauguin: Voyage to Paradise* (2019); *Warhol: Flowers in the Factory* (2018); and *Marc Chagall, Flowers, and the French Riviera: The Color of Dreams* (2017).

ABOUT MARIE SELBY BOTANICAL GARDENS

Marie Selby Botanical Gardens provides 45 acres of bayfront sanctuaries connecting people with air plants of the world, native nature, and our regional history. Established by forward thinking women of their time, Selby Gardens is composed of the 15-acre Downtown Sarasota campus and the 30-acre Historic Spanish Point campus in the Osprey area of Sarasota County, Florida. The Downtown Campus on Sarasota Bay is the only botanical garden in the world dedicated to the display and study of epiphytic orchids, bromeliads, gesneriads and ferns, and other tropical plants. There is a significant focus on botany, horticulture, education, historical preservation, and the environment. The Historic Spanish Point (HSP) Campus is located less than 10 miles south along Little Sarasota Bay. The HSP Campus, one of the largest preserves showcasing native Florida plants that is interpreted for and open to the public, celebrates an archaeological record that encompasses approximately 5,000 years of Florida history.

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