

# NYBG/125

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***Impressionism: American Gardens on Canvas* Captures the Spirit of Gardens that Inspired Artists at the Turn of the 20th Century  
May 14—September 11, 2016**

Art Exhibition of Paintings and Sculptures by William Merritt Chase, Childe Hassam, John Singer Sargent, and Others Accompanies Vibrant Flower Show



Edmund William Greacen, *In Miss Florence's Garden*, 1913.  
Oil on canvas, 30 x 30 inches, A Private Collector

**Bronx, NY**—The New York Botanical Garden continues to explore the connections between the plant world and the arts through captivating flower shows and fine art in its upcoming exhibition, *Impressionism: American Gardens on Canvas*, from May 14 through September 11, 2016. During this Garden-wide exhibition, visitors will experience the horticultural inspiration behind American Impressionism as well as view more than 20 Impressionist artworks.

In the *Seasonal Exhibition Galleries* of the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory, visitors will stroll through an American Impressionist garden inspired by the paintings of iconic artists, including William Merritt Chase, Childe Hassam, and John Singer Sargent. The horticultural exhibition is designed by Francisca Coelho, the Garden's Vivian and Edward Merrin Vice President for Greenhouses and Exhibitions, who has re-imagined gardens for NYBG exhibitions, including Emily Dickinson's Victorian garden in Amherst, Massachusetts; Claude Monet's flower and water gardens in Giverny, France; and Frida Kahlo's Casa Azul garden in Coyoacán, Mexico.

Coelho's American Impressionist garden will feature an ebullient mix of the old-fashioned flowers depicted in paintings of the gardens of Florence Griswold, Celia Thaxter, John Twachtman, and other celebrated gardeners of the era. Under Coelho's direction, NYBG horticulturists will plant tens of thousands of cornflowers, larkspur, hollyhocks, peonies, columbines, and hundreds of other cheerful bulbs, annuals, biennials, and perennials in beds and borders lining the walkways. Visitors will stroll beneath trellises adorned with morning glories, through grassy meadows dotted with poppies, and along beds of irises of every color of the rainbow. They will be encouraged to sit on chairs on the porch of a charming New England cottage with views of the whole colorful ensemble.

The LuEsther T. Mertz Library's Art Gallery at NYBG will exhibit a complementary display of more than 20 paintings and sculptures by Chase, Hassam, Sargent, and their contemporaries that captures the colors, shadows, and ephemeral quality of light the artists observed in the natural world and infused in their distinctive imagery.

The garden of Florence Griswold, the doyenne of the Old Lyme, Connecticut artist colony, is depicted in Edmund William Greacen's *In Miss Florence's Garden* (1913). Chase's *Landscape: Shinnecock, Long Island* (ca. 1896) and *Park in Brooklyn* (1887) portray luscious landscapes of familiar East Coast sites. Sargent's *The Fountain of Oceanus* (1917) features a sculpture at Kykuit, the John D. Rockefeller Estate in Pocantico Hills, New York. Childe Hassam's *Horticulture Building, World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago* (1893) depicts a social scene in front of a Victorian glasshouse similar to NYBG's Haupt Conservatory. Three bronze sculptures are also included in the exhibition, most notably Anna Vaughn Hyatt Huntington's grand *Diana of the Chase* (ca. 1922), which at 99 inches tall will be on display in the Library Gallery Rotunda. *Impressionism: American Gardens on Canvas* is guest curated by Linda S. Ferber, Ph.D., Senior Art Historian and Museum Director Emerita of The New-York Historical Society.

American Impressionists in the U.S. created an identity unique from their French peers by painting self-consciously American subjects: notably, the American garden. Many American Impressionists and their spouses were avid gardeners, and parallels were often made between gardening and Impressionism. In a departure from other exhibitions on this artistic period, *Impressionism: American Gardens on Canvas* will examine exclusively American gardens as a compelling subject for American Impressionists during an era of vibrant gardening culture, evoking this period through a garden designed and created in the Haupt Conservatory for visitors to experience.

The year 2016 marks the 125th Anniversary of the founding of The New York Botanical Garden. Since 1891 NYBG has been a museum of plants dedicated to achieving excellence in horticulture, education, and plant research and conservation. NYBG is committed to connecting gardening to the arts and humanities by offering multidisciplinary interpretive

exhibitions and educational programs that reveal the deep connections between plants and people, nature and culture, and illuminate the importance of gardens to human health and to the lives and work of influential artists and thinkers.

### POETRY FOR EVERY SEASON POETRY WALK

The poems of important 19th-century poet Celia Thaxter (1835–94) and her contemporaries, including Robert Frost and Amy Lowell, will be displayed adjacent to the Haupt Conservatory amid the seasonal beauty of the Garden's magnificent collections. Co-presented with the Poetry Society of America, the Poetry Walk is a continuation of the Garden's Poetry for Every Season series.

### GARDEN-WIDE PROGRAMMING

Throughout the Garden, celebrate the spirit of America and NYBG's 125th Anniversary with an exciting array of programs showcasing many aspects of American culture from this era, which coincided with NYBG's founding. Enjoy jazz and tap performances, a lively evening concert series, lectures and symposia, film screenings of popular entertainment acts, and art activities for children. Special opening weekend events kick off the festivities.

Visit the Garden's Web site, [nybg.org](http://nybg.org), for more information on all the offerings during *Impressionism: American Gardens on Canvas* and to purchase tickets.

### INTERACTIVE GUIDE

A fully responsive exhibition Guide viewable from mobile, tablet, and desktop has been developed to accompany the exhibition and offer information about events, programs, lectures, and symposia. The Guide provides a slideshow, text, and audio content that enhances the visitor experience and offers a virtual tour. The Impressify™ feature allows users to take photographs and transform them into their own Impressionist masterpieces. Mobile Media is generously supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies through its [Bloomberg Connects](#) program, a global initiative that helps cultural institutions innovate and engage audiences through digital platforms.

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EXHIBITION DONORS

*National Endowment for the Humanities: Exploring the Human Endeavor*

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*Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this exhibition do not necessarily represent  
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**The New York Botanical Garden is a museum of plants located at Bronx River Parkway (Exit 7W) and Fordham Road. It is easy to reach by Metro-North Railroad, bus, or subway. The Garden is open year-round, Tuesday through Sunday and Monday federal holidays, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. The best way to enjoy the Garden is with the *All-Garden Pass*, which includes admission to the grounds as well as to seasonal gardens, exhibitions, and attractions such as the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory, Everett Children's Adventure Garden, and Tram Tour. For ticket pricing, please check our Web site. For more information, please call 718.817.8700 or visit [nybg.org](http://nybg.org)**

**The New York Botanical Garden, 2900 Southern Boulevard, Bronx, New York 10458**

**The New York Botanical Garden is located on property owned in full by the City of New York, and its operation is made possible in part by public funds provided through the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. A portion of the Garden's general operating funds is provided by The New York City Council and The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation. The Bronx Borough President and Bronx elected representatives in the City Council and State Legislature provide leadership funding.**

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Images and b-roll available.