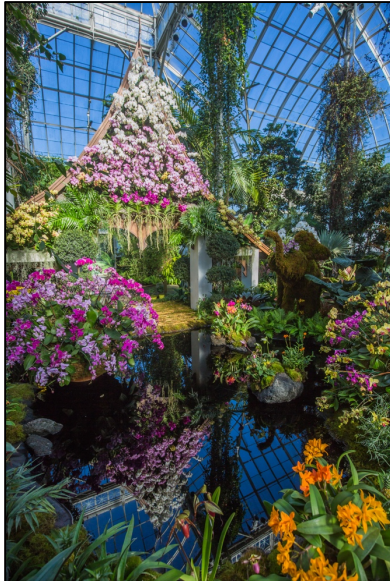


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***The Orchid Show: Thailand* at The New York Botanical Garden Pays Homage to the Beauty and Cultural History of Thai Gardens**

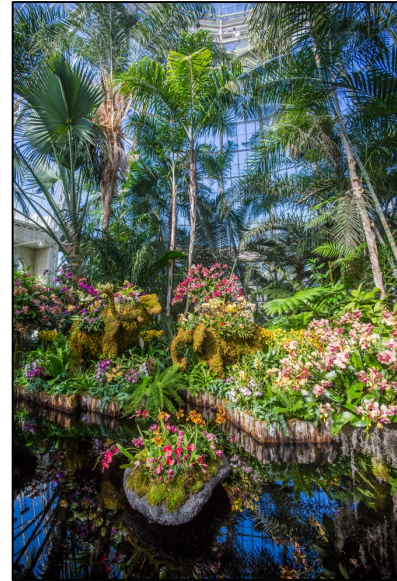
NYBG's 15th Annual *Orchid Show* Runs from February 18 through April 9, 2017



Orchids surround a *sala*.



Sky lanterns hang overhead.



Orchids adorn elephant topiaries.

Bronx, NY—The New York Botanical Garden celebrates its 15th year of spectacular orchid exhibitions with *The Orchid Show: Thailand*, an homage to the wealth of orchids, acclaimed tropical gardens, renowned orchid breeding, and rich cultural history of this Southeast Asian nation, which is home to more than 1,200 native orchid species. From February 18 through April 9, 2017, this year's *Orchid Show* will feature thousands of orchids in a classic Thai garden setting. The grand centerpiece of the design will be a façade reminiscent of a *sala*, a traditional pavilion used for shade and relaxation, festooned with exquisite orchids.

Today Thailand, a leading producer of cultivated orchids for more than a century, is the biggest exporter of tropical orchids in the world. Native and hybrid orchids alike have become almost synonymous with Thailand. Because of the region's hospitable climate, orchids are not only cherished for their color and texture in gardens, these dazzling flowers are also grown on trees that line public streets.

The exhibition begins in the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory's *Palms of the World Gallery*, where elephant topiaries planted with orchids greet visitors. The Thai elephant—a population of Asian elephant that lives in the country's northern mountains—is an official national symbol of Thailand and appears in the emblems of many of the nation's provinces as well.

In the *Seasonal Exhibition Galleries*, a lush garden planted with orchids reflects Thai cultural and design influences. Walkways are lined with objects traditional to Thai gardens. Small ponds and pools create a tranquil atmosphere. Colorful flowers float in large water jars, creating a contemplative moment. There are two spirit houses—small shrines to protective spirits. Decorative lanterns hang in trees overhead in the Thai tradition of sky lanterns (*khom loi*) lit on celebratory occasions to symbolically carry away bad fortune and bring good luck.

Small topiaries serve as a tribute to *mai dat*, the ancient Thai method of clipping trees and shrubs into abstract and fanciful shapes. Plants are pruned and trained over time to form ball-shaped leaf formations at the ends of their branches. An arched façade of a traditional Thai pavilion adorned with hundreds of orchids is the centerpiece of the design.

An astonishing array of orchids on view will include varieties that have helped Thailand earn its international reputation as a center for orchid horticulture and breeding. It is now world famous for breeding *Vanda* orchids, whose large patterned blooms are popular in Thai gardens and homes, as well as the extraordinary *Dendrobium*, another genus grown widely in Thailand that offers a uniquely tropical quality with cane-like stems resembling bamboo. *Paphiopedilum* orchids, which grow in Thailand's highest mountain forests, captivate with their unusual and beautiful pouch-shaped petals.

To create this irresistible paradise of fragrance and color, NYBG horticulturists assemble thousands of flowers from the Garden's research collections as well as the finest growers across the country. Orchids of seemingly every conceivable color, shape, and provenance, including rare and iconic specimens, will be on display.

The Orchid Show: Thailand is designed by Christian Primeau, who oversees the extensive tropical/subtropical plant collections housed in 11 different environments in the Haupt Conservatory. Marc Hachadourian, Director of the Nolen Greenhouses, curates the exhibition's orchid selection and NYBG's extensive groupings of living plants from around the world maintained in the Nolen Greenhouses, the behind-the-scenes glasshouses where plants for the Garden's indoor and outdoor displays and science research program are grown and maintained.

Since 1990 the Garden has been a designated Plant Rescue Center, charged with nurturing and bringing back to health orchids that have been collected illegally in the wild and seized at international borders through the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). NYBG's orchid experts, Marc Hachadourian and Matthew Pace, Ph.D., Assistant Curator in the Garden's William and Lynda Steere Herbarium, are at the forefront of modern orchidology and conservation.

Diverse Programming Enhances *The Orchid Show* Experience

Complementary programming, including film screenings, dance performances, tours, and demonstrations, enrich the exhibition.

- **Orchid Evenings**

Saturdays: March 4, 11, 18, and 25; April 1 and 8

Fridays: March 31 (LGBT Night) and April 7

6:30–9:30 p.m. (entry times at 6:30, 7, and 7:30 p.m.)

Stroll through *The Orchid Show: Thailand* in the lush Conservatory, while music, dance, and unmatched beauty create one of New York City's most unique and spectacular evening outings.

On April 1 and 8, visitors can also upgrade their experience with the Young Garden Circle Lounge for skip-the-line access; free parking; a private open bar featuring beer, wine, and specialty cocktails; complimentary light bites; and a live DJ making for an unforgettable night. Young Garden Circle Members should contact the Garden Patrons Office at 718.817.8553 or ygcevents@nybg.org to reserve their complimentary tickets to these events.

Non-Member \$35/Member \$25 (Adults 21 and over)

Advance tickets recommended. Cash bar available.

- **Film Screenings**

Vanilla: The Sacred Orchid

Saturday, February 18 and Sunday, February 19; 1, 1:30, and 2 p.m.

In Ross Hall

Learn the intriguing life process—from flower to pantry—of a favorite flavor. This scenic film examines the full-year cycle of this spice from Veracruz, Mexico. The vanilla orchid is still cultivated by the same indigenous people who have been growing it for centuries. The film is directed by Curtis Craven and runs 26 minutes.

Adaptation

Saturday, February 25 and Sunday, February 26; 2 p.m.

In Ross Hall

In this popular 2002 feature film inspired by Susan Orlean's book *The Orchid Thief*, Nicolas Cage plays Charlie Kaufman, a lovelorn L.A. screenwriter overwhelmed by feelings of inadequacy, self-loathing, and the screenwriting ambitions of his freeloading twin brother, Donald (also Cage). While struggling to adapt *The Orchid Thief* by Orlean (Meryl Streep), Kaufman's life spins from pathetic to bizarre. The lives of Kaufman, Orlean, and John Laroche (Chris Cooper), the orchid poacher and subject of the book, become strangely intertwined as each one's obsession collides with those of the others. (114 minutes, Rated R)

- **Dance Performances**

Magical Thailand—A Journey with the Somapa Thai Dance Company

Saturdays and Sundays, March 4–April 9

Performances at 1 and 3 p.m.

In Ross Hall, or seasonally in Conservatory Plaza

The Somapa Thai Dance Company takes you on a journey to experience beautiful and magical Thailand. The Washington, D.C.-based dance company introduces audiences to Thai performing arts and culture with graceful classical and folk dances from various parts of Thailand.

- **The Orchid Show Tours**

Tuesdays–Fridays; 12:30 and 2:30 p.m.

Meet at the Conservatory Entrance

Tour *The Orchid Show* with an expert guide. Get a brief introduction to the biology of orchids to learn what makes them so different from other flowers, and learn about some of the current research projects that our scientists are working on.

- **Roaming Guides**

Saturdays and Sundays; 10 a.m.–4 p.m.

In the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory

Garden guides highlight parts of the permanent collection and special exhibition to add insight to your experience of *The Orchid Show*. They will provide an in-depth look at rare and extraordinary orchid specimens on display.

- **Orchid Care Demonstrations**

Saturdays and Sundays; 2:30 and 3:30 p.m.

In the Conservatory GreenSchool

Join NYBG experts as they discuss the basics of orchid care and how to choose and successfully grow these exotic plants.

- **Orchid Expert Q&A**

Saturdays and Sundays; 1:30–4:30 p.m.

In NYBG Shop

Drop in and ask about orchid care tips. Get help selecting the proper orchid for your home.

Also During *The Orchid Show*

Thousands of top-quality orchids, from exotic, hard-to-find specimens for connoisseurs to elegant yet easy-to-grow varieties for beginners, are available for purchase at NYBG Shop, along with orchid products and books. During *The Orchid Show*, visitors can enjoy a selection of dining options at the Hudson Garden Grill, NYBG's full-service restaurant, which will have Thai-inspired offerings, and at the Pine Tree Café.

For more information about *The Orchid Show: Thailand* and to purchase tickets, please visit the Garden's Web site, www.nybg.org.

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Exhibitions in the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory are made possible by the Estate of Enid A. Haupt.

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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 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 www.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 available.