



THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN

For Immediate Release
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Botanical Garden Celebrates the Achievements of African Americans in Special Black History Month Programs

During the month of February, The New York Botanical Garden will honor the accomplishments of prominent African Americans, including plant scientist extraordinaire George Washington Carver, self-taught topiary artist Pearl Fryar, and revered civil rights leaders Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Rosa Parks. Through a variety of programs held during the winter break for New York City Public Schools (February 14–22, 2009), including theatrical presentations, musical performances, and documentary screenings, visitors will have an opportunity to learn more about the great achievements of these figures in Black history.

The Life and Work of George Washington Carver Through February 22

In this interactive program, children will learn how Dr. George Washington Carver introduced the peanut to southern farmers and helped them get the boll weevil population under control to promote the growth of successful cash crops. Donning white lab coats and armed with magnifying glasses, children will investigate the anatomy of seeds, diagnose and remedy sick plants, make an herbarium specimen, and plant a soybean to chart its growth at home. They can also enter a replica of Dr. Carver's Jesup wagon, named after New York financier and philanthropist Morris K. Jesup, which Dr. Carver used as a traveling school to bring his agricultural knowledge to farmers.

In the Everett Children's Adventure Garden

Black History Month/African Heritage Month Celebration February 12 at 11 a.m.–1 p.m.

The Botanical Garden celebrates Black History Month/African Heritage Month with a multimedia program featuring poetry, healthy eating, dance, and artwork. Anthony Green of Bronx Historical Society will emcee the event, which includes a poetry recital about the works of George Washington Carver by James Robinson; a presentation "Our Culture...Our Foods" by urban farmer Karen Washington; storytelling by Scottie Davis; and African dance and drumming by Indigo Arts with Caren Calder.

Note: Reservations for this celebration are required by February 9. Please call 718.817.8990.

In the Arthur and Janet Ross Gallery and Lecture Hall

Documentary Screening:

The Garden as Muse: The Garden of Harlem Renaissance Poet Anne Spencer

February 14, 19, 20, and 22 at 1 & 3 p.m.

Through her poetry, interviews with family members, educators and historians, and landscape architects who were involved with the restoration of her garden in the early 1980s, this program tells how Anne Spencer (1882-1975) designed her Lynchburg, Virginia garden as a sanctuary that inspired her poetry and a gathering place for family and friends, including George Washington Carver, Martin Luther King, Jr., and fellow Harlem Renaissance icons such as Langston Hughes, Paul Robeson, and her dear friend, James Weldon Johnson. Ms. Spencer had no formal training as a garden designer though the creativity, sophistication, and innovation of her design are noted in the program.

In the Arthur and Janet Ross Lecture Hall

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Live Performance: *Gifts From My Ancestors*

February 15 at 3 p.m.

Calvin Earl's one-man live performance explores the legendary story of how the African people enslaved in America created an original music that enabled them to secretly communicate with one another, teach their young, record their history, and heal their pain. In doing so, Calvin Earl provides insight into the soul of America's first music.

In the Arthur and Janet Ross Lecture Hall

Documentary Screening: *A Man Named Pearl*

February 15, 18, and 21 at 3 p.m.

The film documentary *A Man Named Pearl* tells the inspiring story of self-taught topiary artist Pearl Fryar. Born to a sharecropper, Fryar entered the "Yard of the Month" contest for his home and discovered that he had a passion for tree sculpting. The upbeat message speaks to respect for both self and others and shows what one person can achieve when he allows himself to share the full expression of his humanity.

In the Arthur and Janet Ross Lecture Hall

Hooray for Martin Luther King

February 17 and 18 at 1 p.m.

Hooray for Martin Luther King pays tribute to the civil rights leader's inspiring messages through lively songs, puppets, and audience participation. The program focuses on communicating the message of peace and brotherhood through fun, and offers a chance for children to be in the show.

In the Arthur and Janet Ross Lecture Hall

Rosa's Ride: A Musical Dramatization of the Life of Rosa Parks

February 21 at 1 p.m.

This live performance follows the struggles of a young Rosa Parks, who through the indignities of prejudice discovers her strength of conviction and by a simple act of civil disobedience gives birth to the civil rights movement. An inspiring score by musical producer Jonathan Luks, using jazz, blues and gospel styles adds to the powerful theatrical experience for young audiences.

In the Arthur and Janet Ross Lecture Hall

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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 Botanical Garden is open year-round, Tuesday through Sunday and Monday federal holidays. 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, Rock and Native Plant Gardens, and Tram Tour: \$13 for adults, \$11 for seniors and students with ID, \$5 for children ages 2–12, children under 2 are free. A *Grounds-Only Pass* is available: \$6 for adults, \$5 for adult Bronx Residents; \$3 for seniors, \$2 for students with ID, \$1 for children ages 2–12, children under 2 are free. Grounds-only admission is free all day on Wednesdays and from 10 a.m. to noon on Saturdays. For more information, please call 718.817.8700 or visit www.nybg.org

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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