

15th Annual *Holiday Train Show* Features Magical Missing Mansions and a Bigger Show

Saturday, November 18, 2006 through Sunday, January 7, 2007

The *Holiday Train Show*, one of the most popular seasonal attractions in the New York area, returns to The New York Botanical Garden on Saturday, November 18, 2006 through Sunday, January 7, 2007. The eagerly anticipated exhibition in the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory showcases a variety of large-scale model trains traversing more than 140 replicas of New York landmarks ingeniously crafted from diverse botanical materials such as gourds, berries, pine cones, leaves, and seeds. More than one million people have attended the *Holiday Train Show* since its inception 15 years ago.

For the “Magical Missing Mansions,” this year’s additions, show designer Paul Busse and his team have created botanical reproductions of elaborate Manhattan homes that were highly celebrated when built, but remained standing an average of fewer than 60 years:

- **Apthorpe Mansion** (91st Street and Columbus Avenue) built in 1764 and torn down in 1892, Colonial lawyer Charles Ward Apthorpe built this house on his 200-acre farm. A hall said to be large enough for a cotillion party, and walls, mantels, and ceilings paneled in brown oak transported from England were evidence of the owner’s great wealth.
- **Senator William Andrews Clark House** (Fifth Avenue and 77th Street) began in 1898, completed in 1910 and torn down in 1925, a copper king and one-term senator from Montana built this six-story, 100-plus-room Beaux-Arts mansion as a testament to his arrival in New York.
- **Jordan L. Mott House** (2122 Fifth Avenue, near 130th Street) built in 1880 and torn down in 1936, this house was originally being constructed by a member of the corrupt political ring of Boss Tweed, “Slippery Dick” Connolly, whose lavish plans called for extensive use of expensive woods such as black walnut, satin wood, ebony, cherry, and rosewood. After Connolly fled the country to avoid possible prosecution, Jordan L. Mott bought and completed the house. The founder of an iron works company, Mr. Mott made this home his own through the addition of considerable ornamental iron throughout.
- **Isaac Stern–Thomas Fortune Ryan House** (858 Fifth Avenue, near 67th Street) built in 1893 and torn down in 1939, successful dry goods store owner Isaac Stern was the original owner of this five-story, limestone-finished early Renaissance-styled home. The exterior was marked by curved windows and a terrace on the second and third floors. The top of the structure featured carved floral swags with oval windows surrounded by molded wreaths. Wrought-iron entrance doors led to, among other interior features, a curved marble staircase and a ballroom. Gutting and transforming the ballroom to an art gallery was the largest structural change made by Thomas Fortune Ryan when he bought the house from newly widowed Isaac Stern in 1905.
- **William K. Vanderbilt House** (660 Fifth Avenue, near 53rd Street) built in 1883 and torn down in 1926, this limestone French Renaissance house was said to represent a new era in residential splendor at a time when Manhattan was drowning in a sea of brownstone. New Yorkers had never seen anything like the Vanderbilt House and it was, for a time, unique on this side of the Atlantic.

The new Magical Missing Mansions will join existing estate replicas, including Washington Irving's Sunnyside; Kykuit, the Rockefeller Estate; and Gracie Mansion, as well as other iconic and familiar sights: Brooklyn Bridge, Apollo Theater, Statue of Liberty, Radio City Music Hall, Empire State Building, Yankee Stadium, and many more—all made of plant parts.

This season, the merriment begins immediately upon entering the Garden's gate. A display of trees bedecked for the holidays will greet all comers to the Leon Levy Visitor Center. A heated and decorated tent covering the entire Conservatory Plaza will shield from the elements enthusiastic visitors entering to the Conservatory and whet appetites for the *Holiday Train Show* with entertainment and surprises. Train displays have been expanded into three additional Conservatory galleries. The stage is being set and the tracks are being laid to make the 15th annual *Holiday Train Show* the biggest, brightest, and best so far.

The holiday season at the Botanical Garden is full of events for the whole family. Children can enjoy *Gingerbread Adventures* in the Everett Children's Adventure Garden and the Holiday Puppet Theater presentations of *The Little Engine That Could*TM in the Arthur and Janet Ross Lecture Hall. Shop in the Garden will offer a wide selection of superb holiday gifts, including the new *Holiday Express* souvenir train show book, large-gauge holiday train sets, starter sets, and train toys for purchase. In addition, the Shop will have an outdoor, large-gauge train display, along with model train experts on hand every weekend. The Snowdrop Queen and Evergreen King will delight and inspire with tales from the plant kingdom on Sunday afternoons. Thomas the Tank EngineTM visits the Garden on January 5, 6 and 7. Adults can experience a variety of spectacular exhibitions: *Buried Treasures: The Nature and Art of Bulbs* in the William D. Rondina and Giovanni Foroni LoFaro Gallery of the LuEsther T. Mertz Library, and *Plants and Fungi: Ten Current Research Stories* in the Nathaniel Lord Britton Science Rotunda and Elizabeth Britton Science Gallery.

During the *Holiday Train Show* Botanical Garden hours will be Tuesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. The Botanical Garden is closed on Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day and closes at 3 p.m. on December 8 and 24.

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Exhibitions in the Conservatory are made possible by 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.

HOLIDAY HOURS: November 18–January 7, 10 a.m.–6 p.m. Tuesday–Sunday. The Botanical Garden is closed on Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day, and closes at 3 p.m. on December 8 and 24.

PRICING: \$18, Seniors/Students \$16, Children \$5. For more information, please call 718.817.8700 or visit our Web site at

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.