

# THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN

*Studying, exhibiting, and conserving plants for 120 years*

For Immediate Release

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## **Literary Audio Tour Offers a New Way to Experience The New York Botanical Garden This Summer**

### **NEA-Funded Project Features Recordings of 12 Local Authors' Works Inspired by Nature on Garden Grounds**

A new, three-part Literary Audio Tour inspired by the natural beauty of The New York Botanical Garden in different seasons is underway, offering Botanical Garden visitors another sensory-rich experience this summer. The Literary Audio Tour currently features recordings of 8 New York City-based writers reading their original, nature-inspired short stories, essays, or poems. Signage indicating each Audio Tour stop is available across the Garden's 250-acre National Historic Landmark site. Four additional stops will be introduced this fall beginning September 9.

"By demonstrating the living relationship between literature and nature, this exciting new collaboration enables the Botanical Garden to present a creative perspective on its gardens and living collections using the works of talented local writers," said Jennifer Rothman, Associate Vice President for Children's and Public Education at the Botanical Garden. "The new Literary Audio Tour offers New York authors a unique platform to disseminate their work and the public free access to literature that would otherwise not be available to them."

A special initiative supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Literary Audio Tour was created by The New York Botanical Garden in collaboration with the Poetry Society of America and the National Book Foundation. In early 2011, 12 New York City-based authors were selected to participate in the program and invited to the Botanical Garden to identify locations that inspired them to compose original works of poetry or prose.

Garden visitors can enjoy poetry amid the splendor of the following collections and locations: Peggy Rockefeller Rose Garden, Thain Family Forest, Benenson Ornamental Conifers, Jane Watson Irwin Perennial Garden, Ladies' Border, Mitsubishi Wild Wetland Trail, Rock Garden, Nancy Bryan Luce Herb Garden, and Home Gardening Center. The cell phone call-in number (718.362.9561) and prompts are featured on signage at each location. Tour participants can use their phones to listen to each author reading his or her work as well as commentary on why that particular location in the Garden served as a source of inspiration.

Authors whose work is currently featured in the Literary Audio Tour are:

- **Ana Božičević**, co-editor of the journal *esque* and author of *Stars of the Night Commute* (Tarpaulin Sky Press, 2009)
- **Leslie C. Chang**, poet and author of *Things That No Longer Delight Me* (Fordham University Press, 2010)

- more -

- **Victor LaValle**, assistant professor at Columbia University and author of the award-winning *Big Machine* (Spiegel & Grau, 2009)
- **Paul Legault**, staff member at the Academy of American Poets and author of *The Madeleine Poems* (Omnidawn, 2010) and *The Other Poems* (forthcoming, Fence Books, Fall 2011)
- **Sofia Quintero**, former policy analyst for New York City Independent Budget Office and author of the novel *Divas Don't Yield* (One World/Random House, 2006)
- **Nelly Reifler**, author of *See Through* (Simon & Schuster, 2006), a collection of short stories
- **Charles Rice-Gonzalez**, novelist (*Chulito*, forthcoming, Magnus Books, October 2011) and Executive Director of The Bronx Academy of Arts and Dance
- **Andrew Seguin**, poet, photographer, and author of the award-winning *Black Anecdote* (Poetry Society of America chapbook, 2010)

Authors whose work will be featured **beginning September 9** are:

- **Hosannah Asuncion**, fellow at the Poetry Society of America and Kundiman, author of *Fragments of Loss* (Poetry Society of America chapbook, 2010)
- **Paul Lisicky**, author of *The Burning House* (Etruscan Press, 2011) and *Unbuilt Projects* (forthcoming, Four Way Books, 2012)
- **Camille Rankine**, fellow at the Poetry Society of America and author of *Slow Dance with Trip Wire* (Poetry Society of America chapbook, 2010)
- **Emma Straub**, author of *Other People We Married* (Five Chapters Books, 2011) and *Laura Lamont's Life Pictures* (forthcoming, Riverhead Books, 2012)

The Literary Audio Tour is a key new component in the Botanical Garden's existing Cell Phone Audio Tours, available at [http://www.nybg.org/visit/audio\\_tours.php](http://www.nybg.org/visit/audio_tours.php). A drop-down menu that includes mp3 files of each author, listed by prompt and Garden location, is available online under the Literary Audio Tour listing. Audio files for the remaining four authors will be live on September 9.

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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, Rock Garden, and Tram Tour: \$20 for adults, \$18 for seniors and students with ID, \$8 for children ages 2–12, free for children under 2. A *Grounds-Only Pass* is also available: \$6 for adults, \$5 for adult Bronx Residents; \$3 for seniors and students with ID, \$1 for children ages 2–12, free for children under 2. 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 [nybg.org](http://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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