

Marlborough

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MANOLO VALDÉS / MONUMENTAL SCULPTURE at The New York Botanical Garden

The New York Botanical Garden and Marlborough Gallery are pleased to announce an exhibition of monumental sculpture by the renowned Spanish artist Manolo Valdés from September 22, 2012 through May 26, 2013. The exhibition, titled *Manolo Valdes: Monumental Sculpture*, will include seven bronze, cor-ten steel and aluminum sculptures ranging in size from well over 17 feet tall to more than 50 feet in width. The sculptures have been sited to take maximum advantage of the Garden's dramatic views with special attention given to the visual impact of the changing seasons. The artist has designed the installation to include surprising changes in the visual character of the sculptures throughout the seasons.

Mr. Valdés points out: "My sculptures are meant to have different lives and personalities throughout the seasons, they look forward to the bright colors of autumn, the snow and light filled ice of winter, spring flowers, the freshness of blooming trees and finally the green fullness of summer, each season will bring many, many surprises!"

Impassioned by artists of the past ranging from Zurbarán to Velázquez, Matisse to Lichtenstein, Valdés finds more than just inspiration in their paintings; he uses their work "as a pretext" (como pretexto) to create an entirely new aesthetic object - a painting or sculpture that while clearly sourced from a known composition is a uniquely brilliant work of art in itself. For this exhibition, Valdés has drawn upon nature, creating sculptures with inventive headdresses which float and wrap around and above monumental female heads. The visage of these heads, a recurring characteristic of Valdés' work, is of a seemingly timeless, ahistorical origin.

The sculptures are at once contemporary and ancient; the dramatic forms and shapes of the headdresses are specifically drawn from the Botanical Garden's collections: the cor-ten steel sculpture *Guiomar*, sited directly inside the Garden's Conservatory gate entry, is embraced by a filigree headdress of delicate ferns, whereas the sculpture *Ivy*, sited in and floating above the Conservatory entrance fountain, is a flourish of abstraction alluding to windblown palm fronds. Six of the seven sculptures draw upon the Garden's ferns, leaves and butterflies for expressive inspiration. One massive sculpture, *Alhambra*, is sited in the great lawn in front of the elegant white frame and glass conservatory. This work is the artist's special salute to Spain; the spacious cor-ten steel sculpture running 50 feet across the lawn draws inspiration from the historic Alhambra in Granada, Spain, with its gardens, architecture and rich cultural history. *Alhambra's* large scale and open lattice walls allows viewers the unique experience of walking into and through the sculpture; this work can be seen and experienced from both the outside looking in and the inside looking out.

Valdés, who lives and works in New York and Madrid, is one of the few contemporary artists who has successfully mastered the disciplines of drawing, painting, sculpture and print making. CONTINUED >>

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CONTINUED >> Born in Valencia, Spain in 1942 he began his training as a painter at the age of fifteen when he entered the Fine Arts Academy of San Carlos in Valencia where he spent two years. In 1964 Valdés, along with Rafael Solbes and Joan Toledo, formed an artistic team called Equipo Crónica. Toledo soon left the association but Valdés and Solbes continued to collaborate until Solbes' premature death in 1981. American and British Pop Art had a strong influence on the artists and they employed their own pop style to experiment with format, image appropriation and social and political references, specifically to the dictatorship of Franco. Following Solbes' death, Valdés reinvented himself, creating the paradoxically muscular and refined expressive style centered on the art-historical motifs that he continues to explore today.

Recent retrospectives of Valdés' paintings, sculpture and graphic work have been held at the Guggenheim Bilbao in 2002 and Madrid's Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia in 2006. His work may be found in more than forty public collections worldwide, including the following: Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, Italy; Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg, Germany; Menil Foundation, Houston, Texas; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Modern Museet Art, Stockholm, Sweden; Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid, Spain; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Massachusetts and The Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York.

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 more information and to purchase tickets, please visit nybg.org or call 718.817.8700.

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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