



THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN

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Vanessa Bezemer Sellers Named Humanities Research Coordinator at The New York Botanical Garden

Appointment Follows Recent Creation of Humanities Institute



**Vanessa Bezemer Sellers, Ph.D.,
Humanities Research Coordinator
of the Humanities Institute at
The New York Botanical Garden**

The New York Botanical Garden is pleased to announce that Vanessa Bezemer Sellers, Ph.D., has been appointed to the position of Humanities Research Coordinator of the Botanical Garden's Humanities Institute.

In her role, Sellers will direct the Garden's new Humanities Institute, located within the Garden's renowned LuEsther T. Mertz Library. Established to strengthen and formalize the Garden's academic role among museums, universities, and libraries, the Humanities Institute will also serve scholars who wish to further their studies in a premier plant research center. The fundamental purpose of the Institute is to form an intellectual community of visiting scholars and graduate fellows whose investigations involve innovative interdisciplinary approaches to areas such as landscape and garden design, urban planning, art history, cultural anthropology, and environmental studies.

Sellers will be organizing symposia related to Garden programs and initiatives; designing and implementing a short-term residency program for established scholars; overseeing all planning for the launch of a year-long fellowship program for emerging, pre- or post-doctoral scholars; strengthening relations with surrounding institutions of higher learning; and collaborating with university faculty and staff of the Garden's professional programs to promote joint activities around the collections of The New York Botanical Garden. The Institute's inaugural symposium, *Women and the City: From a Landscape Perspective*, inspired by the Garden-wide exhibition, *Groundbreakers: Great American Gardens and The Women Who Designed Them*, will be held on Friday, June 20, 2014, at the Garden.

"Dr. Sellers brings to the position a great humanities research background. She is intimately familiar with the Library and its collections after working for more than two years coordinating a publication about the Library collection and is the logical choice to fill this position," said Susan Fraser, Director of the Mertz Library. "The Institute is anchored in the Library where scholars from around the world, including botanists, art historians, landscape designers, artists, and bibliophiles, have come to advance their studies. Dr. Sellers is enthusiastic about the possibilities of finding synergies with people working in different disciplines and linking science, culture, art, and the landscape."

"It is a great pleasure and honor to head the Humanities Institute at The New York Botanical Garden and direct its innovative research program, established to connect the arts and sciences," Sellers said. "I am looking forward to developing initiatives that will foster new interdisciplinary approaches both inside and

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outside the Garden. The Humanities Institute is timely: in addition to being an acknowledged science center, the Mertz Library has recently been recognized by the National Endowment for the Humanities as a premier resource for studies in the arts and humanities. I am excited to work with the dedicated staff of the Garden to make the Humanities Institute an invaluable academic asset for researchers.”

Sellers first visited the Garden in 1989 during her first weekend upon moving to New York City. She became a member a few months later and began to think of the Garden as her “home away from home.” She officially became involved with the Garden when she became a member of the Library Visiting Committee in 2006. Since 2011 she has served as Executive Editor for *Flora Illustrata: Great Works on Botany, Horticulture, and Garden Design*, a forthcoming book published by The New York Botanical Garden in collaboration with Yale University Press.

She has taught at the Bard Graduate Center: Decorative Arts, Design History, Material Culture in New York, worked for The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and also served as a Summer Fellow in Gardens and Landscape Studies at the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection in Washington, D.C. Her area of expertise is 17th-century Dutch gardens.

Sellers earned her Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts in Art History from Leiden University, the Netherlands, and continued her studies in the United States, completing her Ph.D. in Art History and Archeology at Princeton University.

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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 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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