

NYBG

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 29, 2019

The New York Botanical Garden Announces Restoration of the Palm Dome of the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory

Restoration Takes Place April 29, 2019–May 31, 2020



The Enid A. Haupt Conservatory at The New York Botanical Garden (NYBG photo)

Bronx, NY—The New York Botanical Garden (NYBG/the Garden) announced today that the dome of its 117-year-old, glass-and-steel Enid A. Haupt Conservatory will undergo restoration work in accordance with routine maintenance and operations of the Garden’s facilities. The dome of the Victorian-style glasshouse caps the Haupt Conservatory’s celebrated Palms of the World Gallery.

The majority of the 55,000-square-foot Haupt Conservatory surrounding two Courtyards will remain open during the work, except between May 13 and June 1, 2019, when four galleries will be open. The Palms of the World Gallery as well as two adjacent galleries—one used for special exhibitions and one featuring a lowland rain forest display—will be closed from April 29, 2019 through May 31, 2020. The *Holiday Train Show*® (November 23, 2019–January 20, 2020) will be mounted in a specially designed temporary exhibition structure that will be erected adjacent to the Conservatory, along Perennial Garden Way.

Carrie Reborá Barratt, Ph.D., CEO and William C. Steere Sr. President of The New York Botanical Garden, said, “The Haupt Conservatory is a jewel among glasshouses of the world, a Garden icon, and a gathering place for all of the communities we serve. Our regular

maintenance of the building aligns with the Garden's mission in horticulture, conservation, research, education, sustainability, and collections stewardship. By regularly restoring and upgrading our facilities, we aim to continually enhance the experience we offer to visitors by presenting lush displays of the plants of the world. Today we launch #plantlove for 2019, a year of exhibitions, programs, and projects exploring the essential connections between plants, people, and the environment. The palm dome restoration is an important example of how we demonstrate our love of plants."

The Palms of the World Gallery is one of the Conservatory's 11 interconnected galleries, each featuring a different botanical habitat and specimens from around the globe. The Gallery displays New World and Old World palms, cycads, ferns, warm-climate monocots, and a variety of ground covers. Several specimens were cultivated from seed collected by NYBG horticulturists and scientists in the field.

Todd Forrest, NYBG's Arthur Ross Vice President for Horticulture and Living Collections, noted, "The Conservatory—among the largest of its kind in a public garden in the Americas—is an awe-inspiring structure—a landmark guardian of plant life and an iconic example of Victorian-style glasshouses. It is a beloved destination in which to enjoy the extraordinary diversity of horticulture. Caring for it with regularly scheduled restoration projects serves our visitors, collections, and mission and goes to the heart of the Garden's theme of #plantlove for 2019."

The cost for the palm dome restoration is \$17.7 million, with major support from the City of New York, the State of New York, and the LuEsther T. Mertz Charitable Trust. Whenever possible, restoration work and exhibition installations take place before open hours and on Mondays (except Monday federal holidays) when the Garden is closed to the public.

Managing Conservatory Collections



The dome of the Victorian-style glasshouse caps the Haupt Conservatory's celebrated Palms of the World Gallery. (NYBG photo)

As with all its permanent collections, the Garden is committed to the rigorous stewardship of the living plant collections in the Conservatory, entitled *A World of Plants*. Collections in glasshouses present a unique set of horticultural opportunities and challenges. The Conservatory provides protection from the elements, warm temperatures, and high humidity, so plants may be cultivated that would not survive outdoors in New York City. Adjustments are made

throughout the year, including shading in summer to prevent temperatures inside the Conservatory from becoming too warm for visitors and unbearable for plants.

Because its habitats are designed specifically for palms and other warm-climate plants, the Conservatory requires its horticulturists to monitor plant vigor and ensure healthy soils through periodic rejuvenation and replenishment. Palms present a particular set of challenges when cultivated indoors because most varieties have primary growing points on top of their stems. Some inevitably grow too tall for the enclosure, requiring their removal and replacement with younger specimens.

The palm dome restoration provides NYBG curators the opportunity to perform essential horticultural work on the collections housed in the Palms of the World Gallery. Marc Hachadourian, NYBG's Director of Glasshouse Horticulture and Senior Curator of Orchids, and Tropical Plant Curator Emerita Francisca Coelho developed a plan that preserves and protects important specimens while introducing new plants. Nearly 180 plants in the Gallery will be preserved in place or transplanted during the restoration process.

Marc Hachadourian said, "The collection highlights the history of tropical plant research at NYBG and the economic and ecological importance of the Palm family. Through redesign and replanting, we will present new plants that will help us better tell the stories of palm diversity, conservation, and evolution."

Palm Dome Restoration

Constructed by Lord & Burnham Company and completed in 1902, the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory is considered one of the most superb glasshouses of its time. It was designated a New York City landmark in 1973 and has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1967. The entire facility underwent restoration completed in 1997 under the direction of Beyer Blinder Belle.

This current restoration, led by Jan Hird Pokorny Associates (JHPA) and Silman Structural Engineers, focuses on the central dome atop the Palms of the World Gallery. It comprises the cupola, upper dome, drum (or compression ring), and lower dome. Interior scaffolding and a temporary horizontal work surface erected below the dome drum and an enclosed cylinder around the exterior of the drum and portions of the lower and upper domes will enable the work to take place efficiently while safeguarding the specimens. The work surface will act as a weather-proof barrier ensuring the Gallery below remains protected and properly climatized.

Because of the humid conditions maintained inside and the range of New York City weather through the seasons, the protective structure is designed to maintain the required interior environmental conditions while allowing the contractor to make necessary repairs.

Conservatory restoration projects occur approximately every 20 years. Using leading-edge materials and technologies, the restoration will help make the building more energy efficient while respecting its landmark status.

Dome infrastructure will also be upgraded, including the mechanical operation of the dome windows, misting system, heating, and lighting. The painted wood cladding around the drum and the wood cornice will be replaced with aluminum requiring less maintenance. Gutters and snow guards will be also be upgraded. The plan also addresses facility upgrades to the Conservatory's heating systems and public restrooms, applying high-performance coatings on the interior steel and exteriors, including the façade and entablature, improved exhibition and path lighting, and repair of bluestone pavers in the Courtyards.

Launch of a New Interactive Mobile Guide



A new Palm Dome Interactive Mobile Guide will allow visitors to virtually explore inside the Palms of the World Gallery from multiple angles.

As part of the its 2019 theme #plantlove, the Garden has commissioned a new Palm Dome Interactive Mobile Guide, to launch in June. By activating the Guide on a mobile device, Garden visitors may access video allowing them to virtually explore inside the Conservatory's Palms of the World Gallery from multiple angles by moving their devices in any direction. The Mobile Guide creates an immersive experience and includes soil-to-ceiling views augmented with audio and video providing information about what the viewer is seeing. In creating the experience, clusters of cameras will capture 360-degree views of the plant collections and the historic structure in

which they are housed from varied heights. The Garden has previously developed Interactive Mobile Guides for seasonal exhibitions, but the Palm Dome Interactive Mobile Guide will be the most innovative to date.

Todd Forrest said, "We are looking forward to sharing the Palm Dome Interactive Mobile Guide with our visitors and providing a very different experience of the interior. While we know some visitors will miss having physical access to the Palms of the World Gallery during the restoration, we are delighted to be able to offer this extraordinary virtual tour and additional context. It allows visitors to access never-before-seen views of the tops of the towering palms. And, as always, the Garden's magnificent 250-acre grounds, outdoor collections, new Edible Academy, art and science galleries, and the majority of the Conservatory will be open regular Garden hours during this period."

The Palm Dome Interactive Mobile Guide is made possible by Bloomberg Philanthropies.

Exhibitions During Palm Dome Restoration

During the palm dome restoration, NYBG's exhibitions typically presented in the Palms of the World Gallery and in the adjacent gallery used for special exhibitions—among the Garden's most popular attractions for visitors—will take place at alternate venues on site and, as usual, in the LuEsther T. Mertz Library Art Gallery. The 2019 summer exhibition (June 8–September 29), *The Living Art of Roberto Burle Marx*, celebrating the Brazilian modernist and polymath who embraced art, design, landscape architecture, and plant discovery and conservation, will be installed in one of the Conservatory Courtyards and on the Conservatory Lawn, in two Conservatory galleries, and in the Art Gallery. Additional sites in the Garden will be activated with references to Burle Marx. It is the first-ever exhibition to combine a large-scale horticultural tribute to Burle Marx's landscape design with a presentation of his paintings, prints, drawings, and textiles.

Todd Forrest noted, "We have long wanted to explore Burle Marx's multifaceted practice in a special exhibition for our visitors but didn't think we could do it justice in the spaces we traditionally use for our living exhibitions. It's thrilling to be able to pay homage to his singular design sensibilities outdoors in the Garden and display large specimens of the tropical plants he loved so much."

The *Holiday Train Show* in 2019 will take place in a specially designed temporary exhibition structure that will be erected adjacent to the Conservatory.

About The New York Botanical Garden

The New York Botanical Garden is an iconic living museum, a major educational institution, and a renowned plant research and conservation organization. Founded in 1891 and now a National Historic Landmark, it is one of the greatest botanical gardens in the world and the largest in any city in the United States, distinguished by the beauty of its diverse landscape and extensive collections and gardens, as well as by the scope and excellence of its programs.

###

Palm Dome Restoration Donors

LuEsther T. Mertz Charitable Trust

The City of New York

Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr.

Mayor Bill de Blasio and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs

New York City Council Member Ritchie J. Torres

The State of New York

Empire State Development Corporation

New York State Dormitory Authority

The New York Botanical Garden is located at Bronx River Parkway (Exit 7W) and Fordham Road. It is easy to reach by Metro-North Railroad, bus, 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.

Media Contacts:

Stevenson Swanson: 718.817.8512; sswanson@nybg.org

Melinda Manning: 718.817.8659; mmanning@nybg.org

Libby Mark or Heather Meltzer

Bow Bridge Communications, New York City: 347.460.5566; info@bow-bridge.com