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NYBG Announces Writer and Photographer Benjamin Swett as Recipient of 2024's Larry Lederman Photography Fellowship

2023 Fellow Ngoc Minh Ngo's Final Photography Portfolio Accessioned by NYBG's LuEsther T. Mertz Library



(Left) Benjamin Swett, 2024 Recipient of Larry Lederman Photography Fellowship; (Right) Ngoc Minh Ngo, 2023 Recipient of Larry Lederman Photography Fellowship

Bronx, NY— The Humanities Institute of The New York Botanical Garden (NYBG) announced that writer and photographer Benjamin Swett has been chosen as the recipient of the 2024 Larry Lederman Photography Fellowship. Between April 1 and December 31, 2024, Swett will work at NYBG and in the Bronx, New York, to produce a 20-photograph portfolio. Swett's publications include the award-winning book *New York City of Trees* (2013) and *Route 22* (2007).

The Humanities Institute also announced that Ngoc Minh Ngo, the 2023 recipient of the Larry Lederman Photography Fellowship, submitted her final portfolio, which was accessioned on March 5, 2024, by NYBG's LuEsther T. Mertz Library, where it will be catalogued and made available to all Library patrons. The portfolio, made of 20 black-and-white and color photographs of The New York Botanical Garden, was received by the

Director of the LuEsther T. Mertz Director Rhonda Evans, the Humanities Institute Director Lucas Mertehikian, Vice President for Horticulture Todd Forrest, and Senior Director of Bronx Green-Up Ursula Chanse. Photographer John Maggiotto, member of the selection committee, was also present.

The Larry Lederman Photography Fellowship is awarded annually to an outstanding established or emerging photographer whose work focuses on gardens or landscapes and demonstrates excellence and a creative approach to the art of landscape photography. The selected Fellow receives a \$20,000 grant dispersed in installments for a nine-month term, March 1 through November 30, 2024, during which time the Fellow will have complimentary access to NYBG's 250-acre landscape and collections.

During the nine-month term, Benjamin Swett, as the 2024 Fellow, will create a portfolio of photographs that captures the aesthetic character, seasonality, and ephemeral quality of The New York Botanical Garden and/or community gardens in its Bronx Green-Up program, parks, natural areas, and urban landscapes throughout the Bronx environs. At least 20 percent of the work should include photos taken onsite at NYBG, a 250-acre National Historic Landmark site, or its affiliated community gardens. A portfolio of at least 20 prints, from the submitted body of work, will be delivered to NYBG's LuEsther T. Mertz Library at the end of the term.

For more information about the Larry Lederman Photography Fellowship, please email the NYBG Humanities Institute at humanities@nybg.org. To read more about the Fellowship, please visit <https://www.nybg.org/learn/humanities-institute/research-opportunities/the-larry-lederman-photography-fellowship>.

About Larry Lederman

Larry Lederman, a noted landscape photographer and longtime friend of NYBG, has been photographing landscapes for the past 20 years. His work has been exhibited in the Arthur and Janet Ross Gallery at NYBG and numerous other venues. He is the author of *Garden Portraits: Experiences of Natural Beauty*, *Magnificent Trees of The New York Botanical Garden*, *Rockefeller Family Gardens: An American Legacy*, and *Du Pont Gardens of the Brandywine Valley*, all published by Monacelli Press, and the principal photographer of *The New York Botanical Garden* (Abrams), *Interior Landmarks: Treasures of New York* by Judith Gura and Kate Wood (Monacelli Press), and *Frederic Church's Olana on the Hudson: Art, Landscape, Architecture*, edited by Julia B. Rosenbaum and Karen Zubowski (Rizzoli New York).

About Ngoc Minh Ngo

Last year's Lederman Fellow was Ngoc Minh Ngo, a New York-based photographer whose work explores the intrinsic beauty of plants and nature. She is the author and photographer of *Bringing Nature Home*, *In Bloom*, and *Eden Revisited*. Her images have been published in international publications such as *The World of Interiors*, *Architectural Digest*, and *T: The New York Times Style Magazine*. She has also exhibited her work at the Musée Yves Saint Laurent in Marraesh. Her new book is *New York Green: Discovering the City's Most Treasured Parks and Gardens* (Artisan, June 2023), beautifully photographed and heavily researched profiles of parks and gardens across New York City's five boroughs, from corner lots bursting with native plantings along the West Side Highway to a tiny community garden that serves as an essential stormwater management park in Gowanus to nature preserves along Rockaway's waterfront and a sprawling old-growth forest here at NYBG.

About Benjamin Swett

The 2024 Lederman Fellow is writer and photographer Benjamin Swett, whose books combining photographs and text include *Route 22* and *New York City of Trees*, which won the New York City Book Award for Photography. His essay collection *The Picture Not Taken* will be published by *The New York Review of Books* in fall 2024. Recent essays have appeared in *Agni*, *Arnoldia*, *Salmagundi*, *Orion*, *Prism International*, and *Fiction* magazines. He is the author and photographer of guidebooks to the Hudson Valley and to New York City's great trees. He collaborated with singer/songwriter Heather Woods Broderick to produce the book/CD of tree photographs and songs *Home Winds*. A writer and photographer for the New York City Parks Department for thirteen years, Swett founded the Parks in Print program, which produced books, brochures, maps, and guides for New York City's lesser-known parks. He currently teaches writing at City College in Manhattan and is expedition photographer for the Notion Archaeological Project in Turkey. His photographs are in private, corporate, and public collections, including the Museum of the City of New York.

About the Humanities Institute

Supported by The Mellon Foundation, the Humanities Institute at The New York Botanical Garden (NYBG) is a center for innovative thinking at the place where science and the humanities meet—with a spotlight on the growing field of Food Humanities. A lively community of fellows and visiting scholars explores NYBG's historic collections in the LuEsther T. Mertz Library and the William and Lynda Steere Herbarium, furthering interdisciplinary research projects that span issues in foodways, justice, and more, with a special focus on the Bronx. With a rich annual offering of lecture series, workshops, and symposia on these subjects, there's always an opportunity to dive deeper into the connections between art, history, botany, and culture.

About The New York Botanical Garden

The New York Botanical Garden (NYBG) has been a connective hub among people, plants, and the shared planet since 1891. For more than 130 years, NYBG has been rooted in the cultural fabric of New York City, in the heart of the Bronx, its greenest borough. NYBG has invited millions of visitors to make the Garden a part of their lives, exploring the joy, beauty, and respite of nature. NYBG's 250 acres are home to renowned exhibitions, immersive botanical experiences, art and music, and events with some of the most influential figures in plant and fungal science, horticulture, and the humanities. NYBG is also a steward of globally significant research collections, from the LuEsther T. Mertz Library collection to the plant and fungal specimens in the William and Lynda Steere Herbarium, the largest such collection in the Western Hemisphere.

The plant people of NYBG—dedicated horticulturists, enthusiastic educators, and scientific adventurers—are committed to helping nature thrive so that humanity can thrive. They believe in their ability to make things better, teaching tens of thousands of kids and families each year about the importance of safeguarding the environment and healthy eating. Expert scientists work across the city, the nation, and the globe to document the plants and fungi of the world—and find actionable, nature-based solutions to the planet's dual climate and biodiversity crises. With eyes always looking forward, they train the next generation of botanists, gardeners, landscape designers, and environmental stewards, ensuring a green future for all. At NYBG, it's nature—or nowhere.

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The New York Botanical Garden is located at 2900 Southern Boulevard, Bronx, New York 10458. For more information, visit 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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