



MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN

4344 Shaw Boulevard • St. Louis, MO • 63110 • (314) 577-9400 • www.mobot.org

Date: June 2, 2011

What's growing on
at the Garden!



PRESENTED BY EMERSON.

MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN ANNOUNCES MAJOR INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION IN 2012

“Lantern Festival: Art by Day, Magic by Night” Is First Exhibition of Its Kind in the U.S.

WHAT: “Lantern Festival: Art by Day, Magic by Night”

WHEN: May 26 through August 19, 2012, open Thursdays through Sundays from 6 to 10 p.m.

WHERE: Missouri Botanical Garden, 4344 Shaw Blvd., south St. Louis

COST: Special exhibition admission rates apply

SPONSORS: Presented by Emerson with support by Ameren Missouri Pure Power

INFO: www.mobot.org/lanternfestival; (314) 577-5100, 1-800-642-8842 toll free

(ST. LOUIS): The Missouri Botanical Garden in St. Louis will host an international exhibition of 26 larger-than-life, lighted works of art from Zigong, China in 2012. **“Lantern Festival: Art by Day, Magic by Night”** will attract visitors from throughout the country to experience one of China’s most treasured events and ancient traditions – the annual lantern festival. Elaborate outdoor sets crafted of silk and steel will celebrate Chinese culture through bold color, dazzling light and striking design. The exhibition is the first of its kind and size in the United States, offering visitors a unique opportunity to witness a spectacle rarely staged outside of Asia.

Lantern Festival at the Missouri Botanical Garden will be on outdoor display **May 26 through August 19, 2012**. View the art by day, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily; experience the illuminated magic by night, Thursday through Sunday evenings from 6 to 10 p.m. (last entry at 9 p.m.; special evening exhibition rates apply). For more information, visit www.mobot.org/lanternfestival. Emerson, a global manufacturing and technology company based in St. Louis, is the presenting sponsor of Lantern Festival.

“As one of the region’s premier cultural attractions, the Missouri Botanical Garden is

(over)

ADD ONE: Lantern Festival

delighted to bring an international event of this caliber to the St. Louis area,” said Dr. Peter Wyse Jackson, president of the Missouri Botanical Garden. “The Garden has a long-tenured tradition of botanical research and collaboration with China through our Flora of China project, a significant endeavor which we anticipate completing at the end of 2012. Coupled with the presence of our beautiful Chinese Garden, the Grigg Nanjing Friendship Garden, it seemed only fitting for the Garden to host the first Lantern Festival in the country, celebrating in what will be our ‘Year of China.’”

“Emerson is proud to be a presenting sponsor of this magnificent international exhibit,” said Robert M. Cox., Jr., senior vice president – administration of Emerson. “These works of art will educate our community on Chinese history, tradition and culture.”

Lantern festivals are deeply rooted in Chinese history and myth, dating back to the ancient dynasties of more than 2,000 years ago. In modern times, lantern festivals traditionally culminate the 15-day celebration of the Chinese New Year. Giant, ornate lanterns of complex design fill cities with light in vivid, festive spectacles.

A team of 35 to 40 skilled artisans from Zigong in the western province of Sichuan, the center of the lantern-making industry in China, will spend two months in residence at the Missouri Botanical Garden to construct 26 elaborate, multi-piece sets from scratch. Working from reference drawings, sets begin as large outlines on the ground. Steel rods are carefully placed and welded together to fashion the framework of each figure. Structures are draped with specially-treated Chinese silk, designed to withstand outdoor display for several months. Silk is secured to frame edges with a gold trim. The final creations are lit from within or adorned with an exterior piping of lights, giving them a brilliant evening glow.

Each lantern design is full of Chinese tradition, symbolism and meaning. Greeting visitors at the Garden’s entrance is a welcoming gate of dragon pillars, *Hua Biao*, modeled after a more than 500-year-old pair at the Tiananmen Square in China. The original Chinese gates were built to activate the good luck of the Ching dynasty; similarly, the Garden’s *Hua Biao* represents good prospect and turns bad luck into good. Standing sentry at the Linnean Plaza entrance, *The Terracotta Warrior* set features four ten-foot-tall figures depicting the armies of Qin Shi Huang, the first emperor of China. Chinese opera, an art form rich in tradition that combines music, dance and song, is celebrated with masks in *The Faces of Chinese Opera*, the only indoor lantern display.

In a nod to the 2012 Year of the Dragon in the Chinese zodiac, several elaborate lantern sets

(more)

ADD TWO: Lantern Festival

prominently feature the dragon, a mythical creature and cultural symbol of Chinese nationality that represents hopes and wishes for a better future. A swirling dragon embraces a pillar rising from the waters of the Garden's Latzer Fountain. Intricate porcelain dragons, created by stringing and stacking hundreds of porcelain dishes in long, curving rows to form a scaled body, stretch the length of the reflecting pools located between the famed Climatron® conservatory and the Garden's original stone gate entrance. The *Nine-Dragon Mural* uses color, expression and emotion to replicate the artistic architecture of a similar sculpture in Beijing.

A huge, color-changing vase spins in the center of the Gladney Rose Garden, surrounded by eight-foot-tall stems of lotus flowers, a symbol of aspirations to "rise towards the light." The *Heavenly Temple* is a three-story-tall showpiece designed to mimic the beauty, magnificence and majestic presence of the 15th century Beijing Heavenly Temple, where emperors would pray for a fruitful harvest. A sail boat made from thousands of recycled plastic bottles glides through the calm waters of a pond near the Dry Streambed Garden to represent "doing everything well." A pathway sparkling with lit arches of crescent moons and stars symbolizes a happy and celebratory occasion, a rousing and iconic scene at any traditional lantern festival.

In keeping with the Garden's commitment to sustainability, Ameren Missouri Pure Power will donate Missouri wind energy credits to offset the electricity required to power the exhibit for nighttime viewing.

Special exhibition admission rates will apply during Lantern Festival evenings, Thursdays through Sundays, May 26 through August 19, 2012. Nighttime viewing hours are 6 to 10 p.m. (last entry at 9 p.m.) Tickets will be available for advance purchase online at www.mobot.org/lanternfestival in the months preceding the exhibition. Advance group bookings of 15 or more receive discounted admission rates; contact the Tourism Department at 1-800-332-1286 or tourism@mobot.org.

There is no extra charge to view the works of art by day from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. Missouri Botanical Garden general admission is \$8; St. Louis City and County residents enjoy discounted admission of \$4 and free admission on Wednesday and Saturday mornings until noon. Children ages 12 and under and Garden members are free.

The Missouri Botanical Garden is located at 4344 Shaw Blvd. in south St. Louis, Mo., accessible from Interstate 44 at the Vandeventer exit and from Interstate 64 at the Kingshighway

(over)

ADD THREE: Lantern Festival

North & South exit. Free parking is available on-site and two blocks west at the corner of Shaw and Vandeventer.

For more information about “Lantern Festival: Art by Day, Magic by Night,” visit www.mobot.org/lanternfestival. For general Missouri Botanical Garden information, visit www.mobot.org or call (314) 577-5100 (toll-free, 1-800-642-8842).

###

NOTE: Digital renderings available by request. Download media materials at www.mobot.org/press.

About the Missouri Botanical Garden:

The Missouri Botanical Garden’s mission is “to discover and share knowledge about plants and their environment in order to preserve and enrich life.” Today, 152 years after opening, the Missouri Botanical Garden is a National Historic Landmark and a center for science, conservation, education and horticultural display.

About Emerson:

Emerson provides financial and other resources to support hundreds of community organizations and educational institutions. The company’s broad investment provides a significant force in economic growth within these important regions. These commitments spread the benefits of prosperity and enrich the lives of citizens by strengthening communities and regions where we live and work.

The Missouri Botanical Garden is located at 4344 Shaw Blvd. in St. Louis, just south of I-44 at Vandeventer-Kingshighway (exit #287B). Open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day except Dec. 25. Grounds open at 7 a.m. Wednesdays and Saturdays (exception: special admission rate events). Admission is \$8; free children ages 12 and under and Garden members. St. Louis City and County residents are \$4 and free Wednesdays and Saturdays until noon (exception: special admission rate events - third weekend of May, Labor Day weekend and first weekend of October). Park for free on site and two blocks west at the Shaw-Vandeventer intersection. The Garden is easily accessible by taking the MetroLink commuter rail line to the Central West End station and picking up a Metro bus (www.metrostlouis.org). For general information, log on to www.mobot.org or call the 24-hour recording at (314) 577-5100 or 1-800-642-8842. For membership information, visit www.mobot.org/membership call (314) 577-5118 during weekday business hours. For volunteer opportunities, visit www.mobot.org/volunteer or call (314) 577-5187. The Missouri Botanical Garden is a tobacco-free environment.