



MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN

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MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN PRESENTS 'NIKI' IN 2008 *Colorful, Playful Mosaic Sculptures by Niki De Saint Phalle*

(ST. LOUIS): The passionate, imaginative fine art of Niki de Saint Phalle is coming to the Missouri Botanical Garden in St. Louis in 2008! From Apr. 27 through Oct. 31, *Niki* will present 39 mosaic and painted sculptures gathered from around the world, placed throughout the lovely 79-acre botanical garden.

A prolific self-taught artist, Niki created a repertoire of work that also included paintings and illustrations. She sculpted her playful, larger-than-life creations from fiberglass, stones, glass, mirrors and semi-precious materials. Visitors are encouraged to touch many of them and some invite sitting or climbing.

Niki de Saint Phalle (1930-2002) was born in France and raised in New York City. As the only female member of Europe's most important post-World War II art movement, the New Realists, she collaborated with avant-garde artists Yves Klein, Arman and Jean Tinguely, whom she later married. Niki was a citizen of the world, traveling to Asia, Africa and Europe for artistic inspiration.

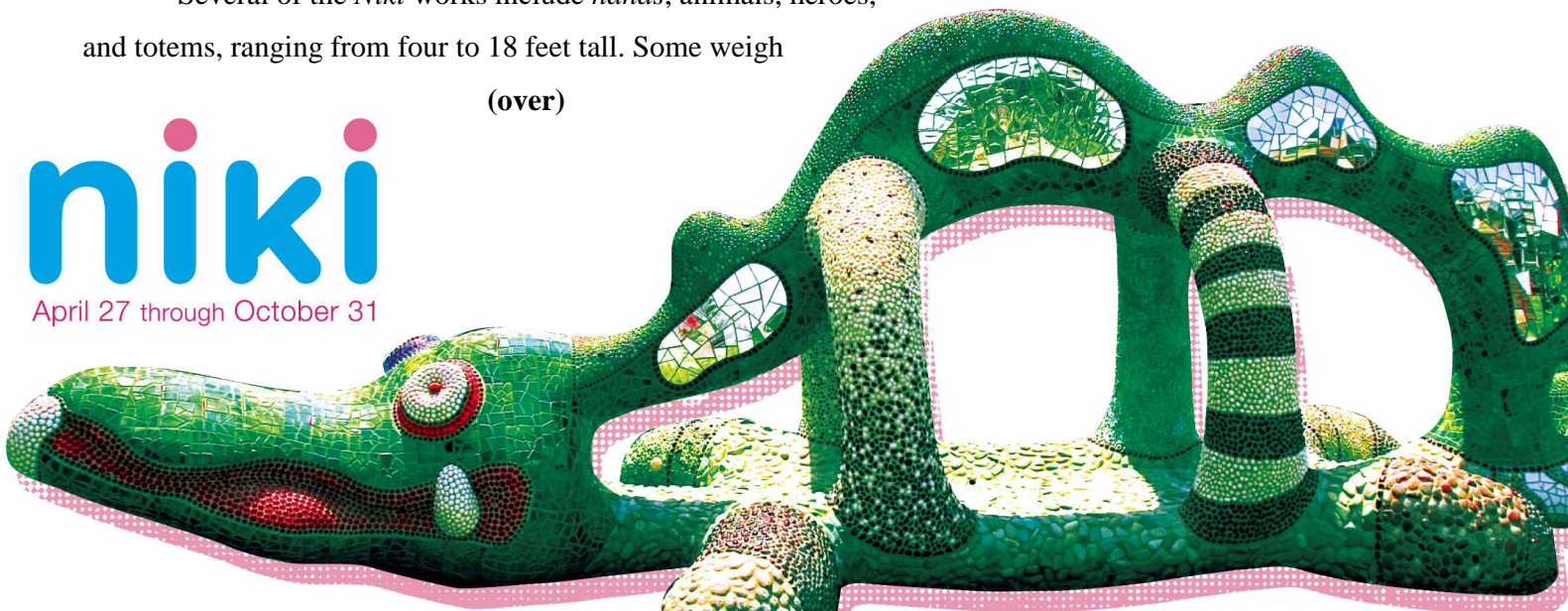
Her work is well-known throughout Europe, South America and Asia. She designed and built two permanent sculpture gardens: *The Tarot Garden* in Tuscany (1980-1998) and *Queen Califia's Magical Circle* (1999-2003) in Escondido near San Diego. She also has major public pieces in Paris (*Stravinsky Fountain*); in Hannover and Duisburg, Germany; and the *Golem* in Jerusalem, as well as a collaboration with Mario Botta on *Noah's Ark*, also in Jerusalem.

Several of the *Niki* works include *nanas*, animals, heroes, and totems, ranging from four to 18 feet tall. Some weigh

(over)

niki

April 27 through October 31



ADD ONE: Niki

a ton or more, such as the amazing six-ton *La Cabeza* (The Head).

Nanas is a French term for “chicks” or “babes.” These joyful, robust dancing women are among Niki’s best known works. *Nanas* have appeared in museums, outdoor sculptural exhibitions and as part of major permanent collections around the world.

Niki loved to see children climbing on her **Animal** sculptures. Her *Guardian Lions*, *Cat*, *Seals* and *Nikigator* invite exploration from the inside out.

Black Heroes portray iconic images of African-Americans in music and sports, including Louis Armstrong and East St. Louis native Miles Davis. **Totems** were inspired by the artist’s reverence for animals, nature, and Native American culture and traditions.

Niki will be included with \$8 general admission to St. Louis’s historic botanical garden (St. Louis City and County residents, \$4 adults, \$2 seniors). Members and children age 12 and under are free.

“Niki Nights” on Thursdays from May through September will feature casual outdoor dining and family entertainment from 5 to 9 p.m. “Niki Nights” admission will be \$7 adults, \$3 children and members. The Doris I. Schnuck Children’s Garden: A Missouri Adventure will remain open until 7 p.m. on “Niki Nights” at no extra charge.

The Garden will offer audio commentary of the exhibition by cell phone or mp3 player, available for download on www.mobot.org. The Garden Gate Shop will carry *Niki* merchandise and mosaics for the home and garden.

The Missouri Botanical Garden is located at 4344 Shaw Blvd. in St. Louis, just south of Interstate 44, two blocks east of the Vandeventer-Kingshighway exit. Park for free at the Garden and two blocks west at the Shaw-Vandeventer intersection. Please note that a section of I-64/U.S. 40 is under construction through 2009. Before traveling, check www.thenewi64.org for updates. Go to www.GetAroundStL.com for other helpful information. Rail commuters can take MetroLink to the Central West End station and catch a Metro bus to the Garden (www.metrostlouis.org).

For general Garden information, log on to www.mobot.org or call the 24-hour Garden Line recording at (314) 577-9400 or 1-800-642-8842. Read about Niki de Saint Phalle and her art on the Web at nikidesaintphalle.com or nikidesaintphalle.org.

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NOTE: Digital color images are available upon request. News releases may be downloaded as .pdf files at www.mobot.org/press.