

**ART IN BLOOM 2016 CELEBRATES SPRING AT THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, ST. PETERSBURG WITH SPECTACULAR FLORAL DESIGNS, SPECIAL EVENTS, AND EXTENDED HOURS**

MEDIA CONTACT: David Connelly, [dconnelly@mfastpete.org](mailto:dconnelly@mfastpete.org) or 727.896.2667, ext. 224

*Art in Bloom 2016*, presented by The Margaret Acheson Stuart Society and the MFA, will be stunning. Approximately 50 floral designs by professional florists, talented hobbyists, and members of The Stuart Society will fill the Museum. The floral designs will go on view Thursday, April 7, at 1 p.m. and continue through Monday, April 11. **Dillard's** is the Presenting Sponsor, and the **Tampa Bay Times** is the Media Sponsor.

"Guess Who's Coming to Dinner" in The Junior League Great Hall will spotlight four tablescape. They will invite an artist represented in the collection to dinner and will include a floral arrangement, place setting, and the title of a recipe from *Food + Art*, the new Stuart Society cookbook.

In addition, a striking floral design will welcome visitors to the Mary Alice McClendon Conservatory, and one will be displayed in the Museum Store. Inspired by works in the collection, children can create their own arrangements with silk flowers in the Explore More Gallery.

The MFA Café will offer a floral-themed special each day and will be open on Monday—an exception—from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Reservations are suggested for Monday by calling 727.822.1032. The Museum Store will feature *Food + Art*, other books, jewelry, cards, and gifts for children.

**Extended hours** will allow everyone to see the flowers. They are: 1-8 p.m. Thursday, April 7; 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Friday, April 8; 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, April 9; 11 a.m.-8 p.m. Sunday, April 10; and 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday, April 11.

**Jan Stoffels** is the overall coordinator, and **Karen Banfield** is chairing the exhibition of floral designs. **Deann Coop** and **Sue Knipe** are the chairs of "Flowers After Hours," and **Linda Dow**, **Marian Yon Maguire**, and **Rhonda Sanderford** are chairing the luncheon. **For reservations to "Flowers After Hours" and the *Art in Bloom* Luncheon, please contact Liz Curry: [elizabethcurry@aol.com](mailto:elizabethcurry@aol.com) or 727.823.3798.** **Carol Russell** is President of The Stuart Society.

The exciting *Art in Bloom 2016* schedule follows:

**Thursday, April 7:** *Art in Bloom 2016* opens to the public from 1-8 p.m. **Museum admission is only \$5 after 5 p.m. on Thursday.**

**Flowers After Hours**, 6:30 p.m.  
Tickets: \$85 per person.

Be one of the first to view the inventive floral designs and enjoy sumptuous hors d'oeuvres; cocktails, including a signature drink; wine; and jazz in the Marly Room and Membership Garden. Images of works from the collection, along with recipes from *Food + Art* and unique floral designs, will decorate each serving station.

**Alexandre Renoir**, the great-grandson of the legendary French artist Pierre-Auguste Renoir, will be the guest of honor. His famous family also includes film director Jean Renoir, actor Pierre Renoir, director of photography Claude Renoir Jr., and his daughter actress Sophie Renoir, to name a few.

Born in 1974 in the south of France, Mr. Renoir moved with his family to Canada at the age of four. He revealed his talent early, graduating from the Victoria School of the Arts and taking classes at the Royal Alberta Museum, both in Edmonton. He studied a variety of media, even ceramics and woodworking, and started designing jewelry for a family venture. He later turned to charcoal drawing and painting, demonstrating the influence of French Impressionism. His work is now in private collections around the world. Mr. Renoir will make comments and greet patrons during "Flowers After Hours."

**Friday, April 8:** *Art in Bloom* continues at the MFA from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. The flowers will be refreshed each day.

***Art in Bloom Luncheon*, 11:30 a.m.**

Grand Ballroom of the Vinoy Renaissance St. Petersburg Resort & Golf Club

Tickets: \$90 per person

Local floral designers will welcome patrons to the luncheon with demonstrations inspired by the Museum's popular painting *Jule Lebrun as Flora* (1799) by her mother Elisabeth-Louise Vigée-Lebrun. They will respond to the question: How would you welcome Vigée-Lebrun back to the Museum? This prized work is currently in the artist's first retrospective, *Vigée-Lebrun: Woman Artist in Revolutionary France*, now on view at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

**Kimberly Schlegel Whitman**, one of the country's top lifestyle and entertaining experts, will share tips, including on floral design, at the luncheon. Based in Dallas, she is the author of seven books, including *Monograms for the Home: The Art of Making Your Mark* (her most recent), *Wedding Inspiration*, *The Party Planner: An Expert Organizing Guide for Entertaining*, and even *Dog Parties: Entertaining Your Party Animal*. She is Editor-at-Large for *Southern Living*, one of the most successful magazines in the country.

Mrs. Whitman is truly a lifestyle entrepreneur, having developed a national following. She has made countless TV appearances and has become a *Today* show favorite. She is a regular on Dallas TV and radio and on the Style Network's *Whose Wedding is it Anyway?* She has been featured in *Vanity Fair*, *Elle*, *Vogue*, *Modern Bride*, the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and many other publications.

A young civic leader and philanthropist, Mrs. Whitman was named Volunteer of the Year by the American Heart Association, one of her many awards. She holds her BA in art history with honors from Southern Methodist University and completed further study in art connoisseurship at Christie's, New York.

**Saturday, April 9:** Everyone can enjoy the fantastic floral designs from 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

**Sunday, April 10:** *Art in Bloom* has extended hours from 11 a.m.-8 p.m.

**Conversations with the Designers**, noon-2 p.m.

No reservations required. Valet parking.

Come early, as this event always draws large crowds. Floral designers will be in the galleries to discuss their creations, inspiration, and techniques. Artist **Babs Reingold** will be a special guest and will talk about two "Hair Doodles" from her series *Fallout: Beauty Lost and Found*. Floral designer **Gretchen Ward Warren** will answer questions about her Ikebana arrangement in response to Ms. Reingold's work. **Benjamin Cobb** and **Martin Rosol** will introduce their glass art in the Marly Room at 3 p.m. as part of "Hot Gatherings, Cool Conversations." Have brunch in the MFA Café and spend the day at the Museum.

**Monday, April 11:** Last day to see *Art in Bloom 2016* from 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

**The Contemporaries Lunchtime Lecture**, noon

\$5 (lecture only), plus MFA admission

\$10 (lecture and lunch) for Contemporaries members

\$15 (lecture and lunch) for nonmembers of The Contemporaries

**Lunch reservations must be made by 3 p.m. the Friday before the lecture by calling 727.896.2667, ext. 210.**

**Babs Reingold**, who lives in St. Petersburg, will discuss her work more fully in the Marly Room. She is known for both her talent and range. She has produced paintings, drawings, sculpture, and room-sized installations. Her work is part of the collections of the Newark Museum in New Jersey and the Savannah College of Art and Design in Georgia. She also has two monoprints and one drawing in the MFA collection.

## **MORE EXHIBITIONS AT THE MFA**

*Visual Metaphor* (Pinellas County High School Art Exhibition)

Through Sunday, April 24

*Christian Marclay: Telephones and Sound Holes*

Through Sunday, May 1

*Contemplating Character: Drawings & Oil Sketches from Jacques-Louis David to Lucian Freud* and

*The Art of the Classical Guitar*  
Through Sunday, May 29

*Measured Life: Works by Vicky Colombet, Babs Reingold, and Tip Toland*  
Through Sunday, June 26

*Vanessa Diaz: Beginning at the Cornice, Not the Foundation*  
Opening Wednesday, April 20

#### **ABOUT THE MARGARET ACHESON STUART SOCIETY**

Founded three years before the Museum opened to the public in 1965, The Stuart Society is named in honor of Museum founder Margaret Acheson Stuart (1896-1980). Over the years, this impressive service organization has raised substantial funds for art acquisitions, exhibitions, educational programs, building renovations and additions, operations, and publications. Members have donated countless volunteer hours to the MFA.

The Stuart Society has been the Premier Sponsor of numerous exhibitions and a Lead Sponsor for the construction of the Hazel Hough Wing, which opened to the public in March 2008. The Society initiated *Art in Bloom* at the MFA, as well as the Wine Auction, Wine Weekend St. Pete, and Wine Weekend St. Pete 2015: Cheers to 50 Years! The organization's importance to the MFA and the community is recognized by a gallery named in its honor. Carol Russell is the current President and in that role, serves on the Museum's Board of Trustees. For more information, please go to [www.thestUARTsociety.org](http://www.thestUARTsociety.org).

#### **ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA**

The MFA at 255 Beach Drive N.E. has a world-class collection, with works by Monet, Gauguin, Renoir, Morisot, Cézanne, Rodin, O'Keeffe, Willem de Kooning, and many other great artists. Also displayed are ancient Greek and Roman, Egyptian, Asian, African, pre-Columbian, and Native American art. The photography collection is one of the largest and finest in the Southeast.

Hours are 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, until 8 p.m. on Thursday, and noon-5 p.m. Sunday. **Admission is only \$5 after 5 p.m. on Thursday.** Regular admission is \$17 for adults, \$15 for those 65 and older, and \$10 for students seven and older, including college students with current I.D. Children under seven and Museum members are admitted free. Groups of 10 or more adults pay only \$12 per person and children \$4 each with prior reservations. The MFA Café is open from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Tuesday-Sunday. For more information, please call 727.896.2667 or visit [www.mfastpete.org](http://www.mfastpete.org).